Egypt: Temple of Dendera

FEATURE (Category: Africa | Egypt | all seasons | cultural-historical | history | religion).................**REGISTER** for LIGHTBOX

Egypt: Dendera, the cosmos of Hathor

Enclosed within its rugged mud brick walls the temple precincts at Dendera seem to be an island left untouched by time. Particularly in the early hours of the morning, when foxes roam around the ruins of the birth house or venture down the steep stairs leading to the Sacred Lake. Stepping into the actual temple is like entering an ancient time machine, especially if you look up to the recently cleaned astronomical ceiling. This is a vast cosmos filled with stars, hour-goddesses and zodiac signs, many of which are personified by weird creatures like snakes walking on long legs and birds with human arms and jackal heads. On the columns just below the ceiling you encounter the mysterious gaze of the patron deity of the temple: Hathor. Deeper into the building (which dates from around 0 AD) is the crypt with the famous "light-bulb" reliefs where the golden statue of Hathor's soul was kept. From there you can follow the route of a New Year procession to the roof of the temple where Hathor's golden soul was rejuvenated by the rays of the sun on the first day of the Egyptian year.

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[EGYPT 29504] 'Dendera Temple seen from its enclosure wall.' An early winter sun rises above the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, here seen from its enclosure wall. In front of the actual temple lies the rectangular basin of the sacred lake, from the bottom of which rises a grove of palms. The enclosure wall was built of sun-dried mud-brick and was several metres thick. After the heyday of the temple, villagers built their simple houses on the wall, deeming it a safe, protectable location. The ruined results of their activities can be seen in the foreground of the picture. The temple itself dates from the first century BC and the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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[EGYPT 29505] 'Dendera Temple seen from its enclosure wall.' An early winter sun rises above the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, seen from its enclosure wall. To the right we see the front of the outer hypostyle hall, which dates to the first century AD. The centre of the picture is occupied by the mammisi or 'birth house', which was built during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus. Photo Paul Smit.

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[EGYPT 29506] 'Dendera Temple seen from its enclosure wall.' An early winter sun rises above the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, seen from its enclosure wall. To the right we see the front of the outer hypostyle hall, which dates to the first century AD. The centre of the picture is occupied by the mammisi or 'birth house', which was built during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus. Photo Paul Smit.

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[EGYPT 29507] 'Sacred lake and mammisi at Dendera.' On the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera a low wall punctuated by gates surrounds the rectangular basin of the sacred lake. In the heyday of the temple the lake provided a reservoir for the water used in offerings and rituals of purification, and it was there that the priests bathed at dawn before entering the temple to begin their service. Empty of water, a grove of palms nowadays occupies the bottom of the reservoir. In the background we see the mammisi or 'birth house', which was built during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus. A temple may have been present at Dendera as early as the reign of Pepi I (around 2270 BC) but most of the present buildings and remains can be dated from the fourth century BC till the first century AD. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

[EGYPT 29508] 'Sacred lake and mammisi at Dendera.' On the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera a low wall punctuated by gates surrounds the rectangular basin of the sacred lake. In the heyday of the temple the lake provided a reservoir for the water used in offerings and rituals of purification, and it was there that the priests bathed at dawn before entering the temple to begin their service. Empty of water, a grove of palms nowadays occupies the bottom of the reservoir. In the background we see the mammisi or 'birth house', which was built during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus. A temple may have been present at Dendera as early as the reign of Pepi I (around 2270 BC) but most of the present buildings and remains can be dated from the fourth century BC till the first century AD. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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[EGYPT 29509] 'Sacred lake at Dendera.' On the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera a flight of stairs descends into the rectangular basin of the sacred lake. In the heyday of the temple the lake provided a reservoir for the water used in offerings and rituals of purification. And it was there that the priests bathed at dawn before entering the temple, visible on the right, to begin their service. The lake may also have been the stage for reenactments of Egyptian myths, such as Isis looking for the body of Osiris in the Nile. Empty of water, a grove of palms nowadays occupies the bottom of the reservoir. A temple may have been present at Dendera as early as the reign of Pepi I (around 2270 BC) but most of the present buildings and remains can be dated from the fourth century BC till the first century AD. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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[EGYPT 29510] 'Roman mammisi at Dendera.' The Roman mammisi on the grounds of the Hathor Temple at Dendera has five remaining columns on its southern side. It was built during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus. A mammisi or 'birth house' is an independent structure within the temple precincts in which the mysteries associated with the birth of a child-god were celebrated. In this case that is Ihy (also called Harsomptus), the son of Hathor and Horus. To the right (in the shade) are the remains of a Christian basilica of the 5th century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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[EGYPT 29511] 'Isis Temple at Dendera.' A temple guard is resting against the porch of the Isis Temple at Dendera. The Isis Temple (built in the 1st century AD) is a separate building located south of the main temple, which is dedicated to Hathor. The southern exterior wall of the Hathor Temple can be seen on the right, with reliefs of the famous Queen Cleopatra VII and her son pharaoh Ptolemy XV (Caesarion). On the left we see the grove of palms which rises from the bottom of the sacred lake. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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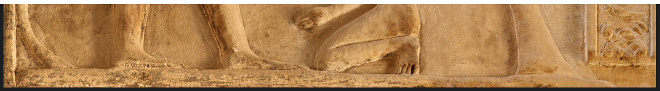

[EGYPT 29512] 'Creation of the cosmos in Dendera's Isis Temple.' Some of the most famous images from the temple at Dendera portray human figures next to bulb-like objects reminiscent of oversized light bulbs. This one is located on a interior wall of Dendera's Isis Temple, which is a separate building located south of the main Hathor Temple. Similar images can be found in the crypt beneath the southern wall of the Hathor Temple. What we witness here is the creation of the cosmos, in the form of an elongated bulb. It springs from a lotus-flower, the lotus being the first object that floated on the primordial sea, according to Egyptian cosmology. From the flower also appears a snake, which is equated to the rising sun and the god Harsomptus and which is enveloped by the cosmos. Harsomptus is also present in human form, standing behind the bulb and his ka (living essence) is kneeling beneath the bulb. The cosmos-bulb with its sun-snake is supported by a Djed pillar with arms, symbol of stability. The Isis Temple dates from the first century BC. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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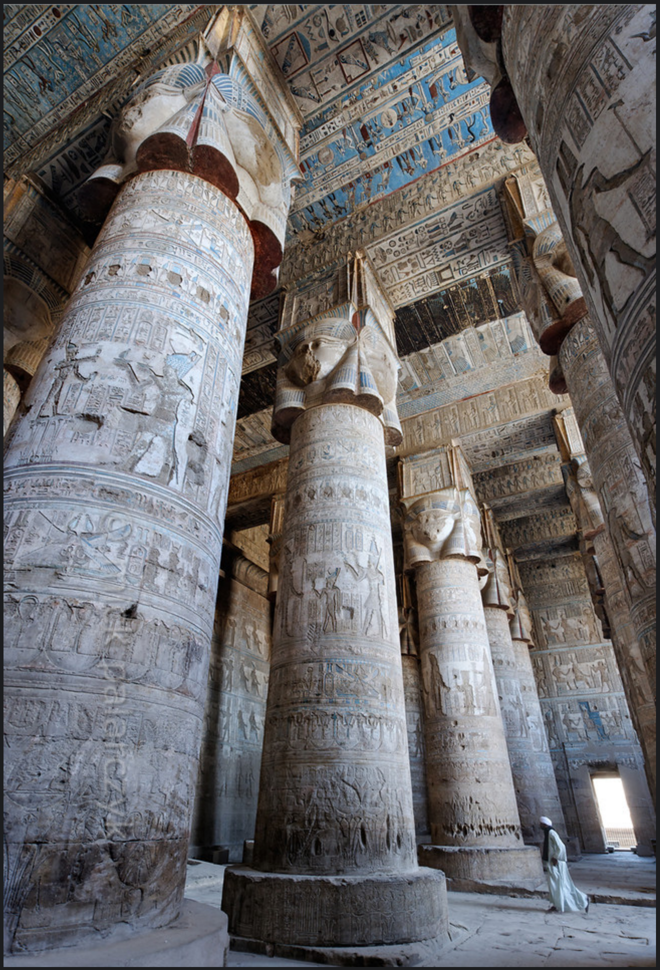

[EGYPT 29514] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". The square structure that is placed on top of the actual face is a sistrum, a ritual musical instrument that produced a rustling sound that was thought to please Hathor. The ceiling of the hall has recently been cleaned of soot and dust and is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. The shafts of the columns bear the image of a pharaoh (recognizable by his blue crown) who can be identified by his cartouches as the Roman emperor Claudius. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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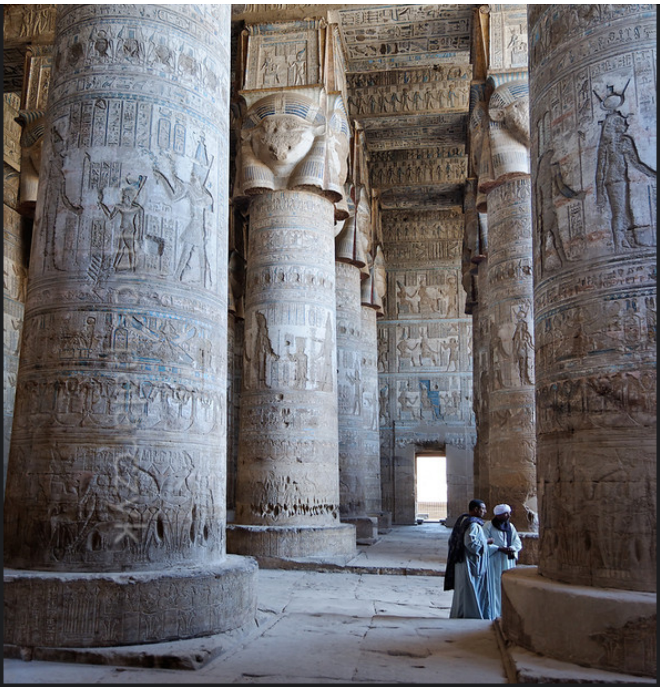

[EGYPT 29513] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". The square structure that is placed on top of the actual face is a sistrum, a ritual musical instrument that produced a rustling sound that was thought to please Hathor. The ceiling of the hall has recently been cleaned of soot and dust. One strip has been left uncleaned however and this is visible as a black zone in the upper half of the picture. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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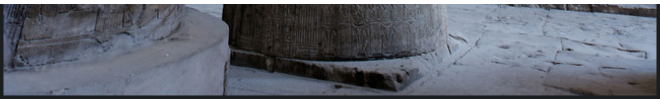

[EGYPT 29515] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". The square structure that is placed on top of the actual face is a sistrum, a ritual musical instrument that produced a rustling sound that was thought to please Hathor. The ceiling of the hall has recently been cleaned of soot and dust and is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. The shafts of the columns bear the image of a pharaoh (recognizable by his blue crown) who can be identified by his cartouches as the Roman emperor Claudius. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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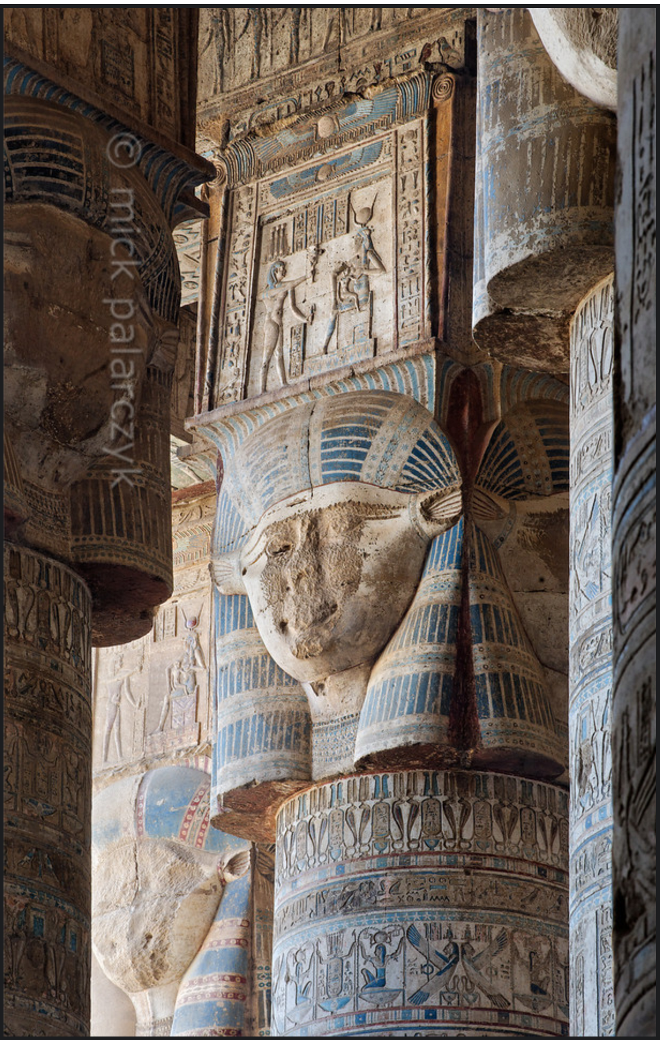

[EGYPT 29516] 'Hathor headed columns in Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". The square structure that is placed on top of the actual face is a sistrum, a ritual musical instrument that produced a rustling sound that was thought to please Hathor. The tiny plates which would make the sound are not visible here, however. Instead a scene is depicted with a seated Hathor suckling the child-god Harsomptus. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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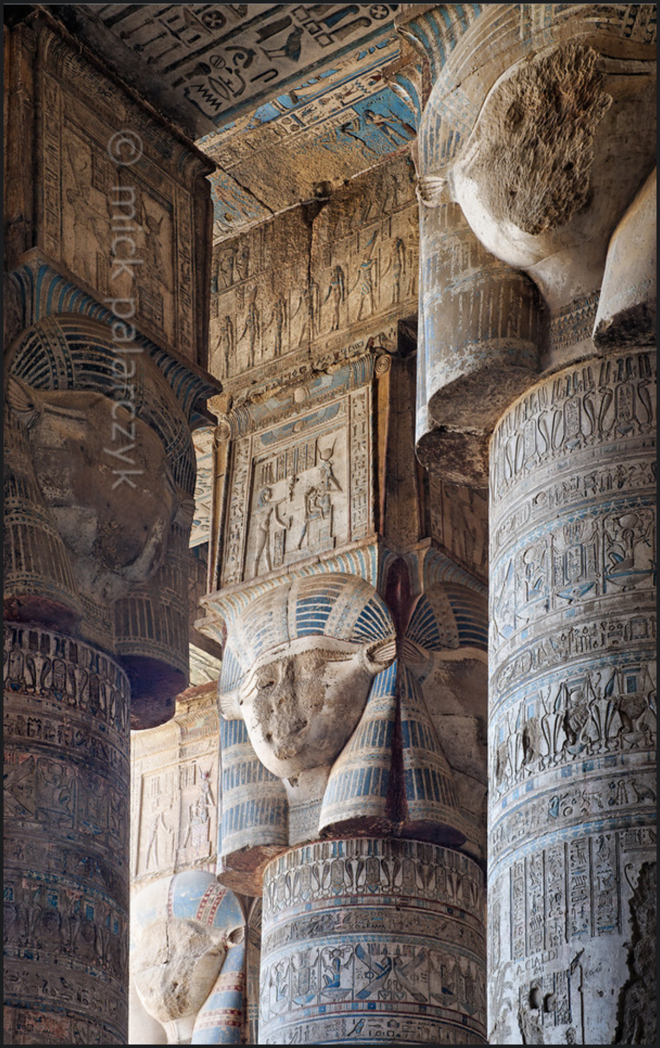

[EGYPT 29517] 'Hathor headed columns in Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". The square structure that is placed on top of the actual face is a sistrum, a ritual musical instrument that produced a rustling sound that was thought to please Hathor. The tiny plates which would make the sound are not visible here, however. Instead a scene is depicted with a seated Hathor suckling the child-god Harsomptus. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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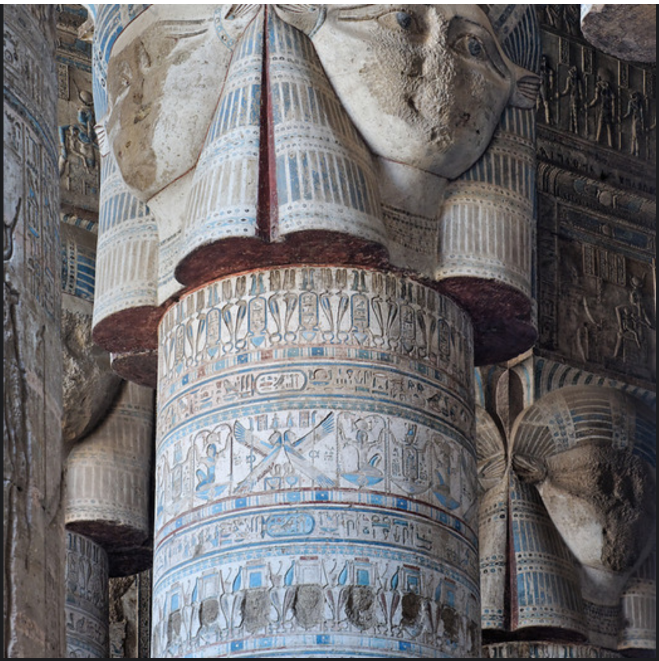

[EGYPT 29518] 'Hathor headed columns in Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". The square structure that is placed on top of the actual face is a sistrum, a ritual musical instrument that produced a rustling sound that was thought to please Hathor. The tiny plates which would make the sound are not visible here, however. Instead a scene is depicted with a seated Hathor suckling the child-god Harsomptus. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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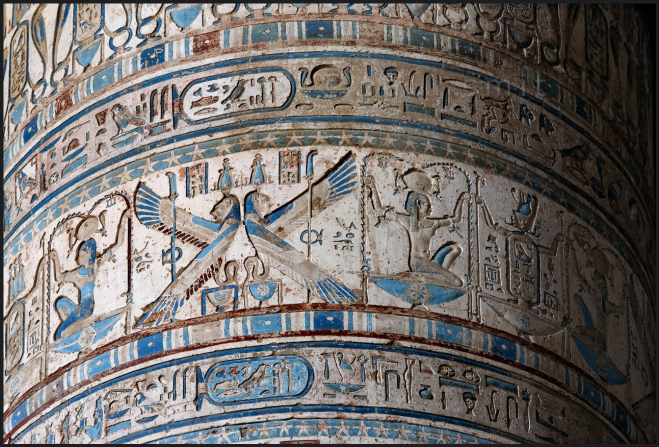

[EGYPT 29520] 'Column in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The shafts of the columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are covered with intricate decorations. One of the more conspicuous figures is Heh, the god of eternity, depicted in a crouching position. He is holding a (leafless) palm stem in each hand, which symbolized long life to the Egyptians, the years being represented by the notches on the stem. The winged lion-headed serpents are personifications of the cobra goddess Wadjet. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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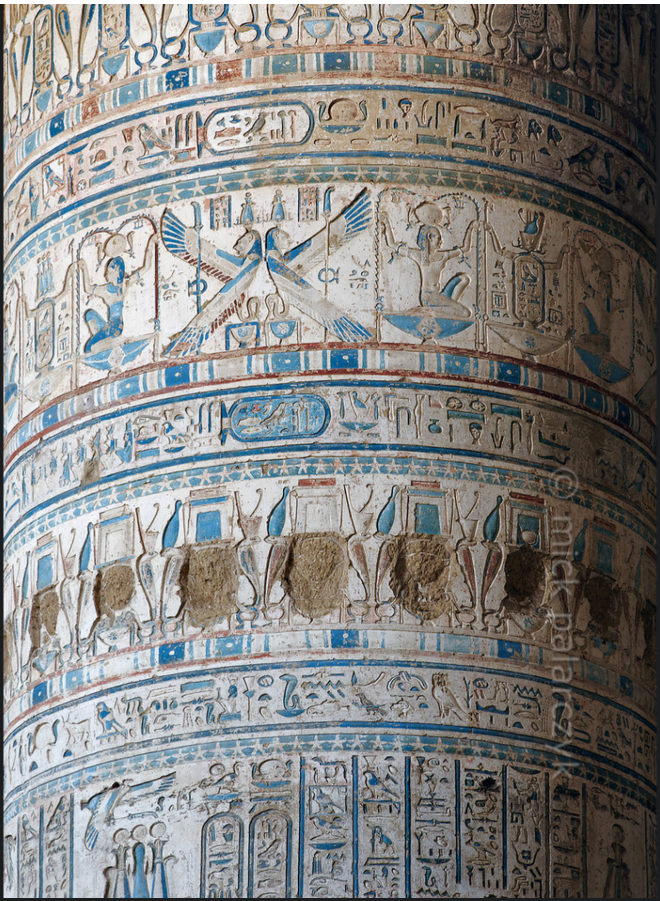

[EGYPT 29519] 'Column in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The shafts of the columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are covered with intricate decorations. One of the more conspicuous figures is Heh, the god of eternity, depicted in a crouching position. He is holding a (leafless) palm stem in each hand, which symbolized long life to the Egyptians, the years being represented by the notches on the stem. The winged lion-headed serpents are personifications of the cobra goddess Wadjet. Sadly, a row of Hathor heads has been defaced. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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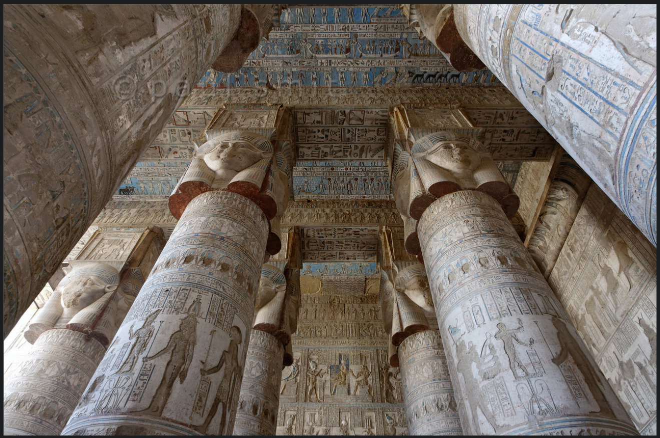

[EGYPT 29521] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". Here we are looking towards the eastern end of the hall. The ceiling has recently been cleaned of soot and dust and is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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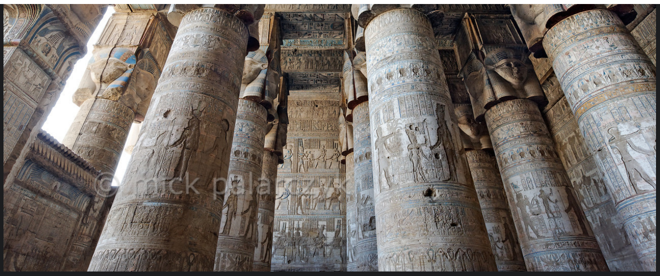

[EGYPT 29522] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". Here we are looking towards the eastern end of the hall. The ceiling has recently been cleaned of soot and dust and is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. One strip has been left uncleaned however and this is visible as a black zone at the upper edge of the picture. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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[EGYPT 29524] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces" The ceiling has recently been cleaned of soot and dust and is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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[EGYPT 29526] 'Sky goddess and zodiac in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera consists of seven separate strips, which are conspicuous by their bright blue colour. Behind the pillars we see the second strip to the east from center. The

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[EGYPT 29523] 'Outer hypostyle hall of Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The columns in the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera are crowned by four-sided capitals carved with the face of the cow-eared goddess. The faces symbolize the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". Here we are looking towards the eastern end of the hall. The ceiling has recently been cleaned of soot and dust and is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. One strip has been left uncleaned however and this is visible as a black zone at the upper edge of the picture. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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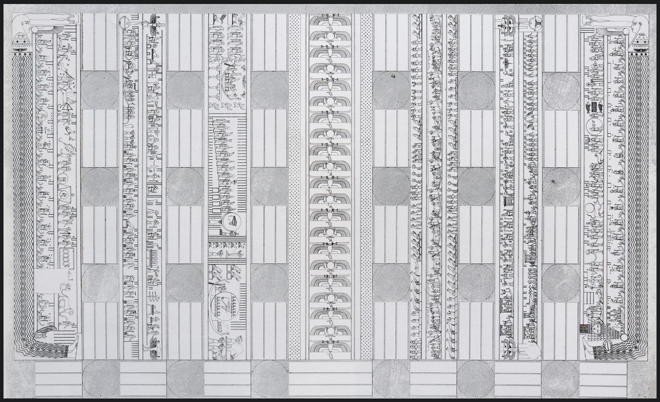

[EGYPT 29525] 'Dendera astronomical ceiling from La Description de 'Egypte.' The ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall (or pronaos) of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is decorated with a complex set of astronomical figures, constellations, planets and a zodiac. This drawing shows the entire ceiling, with the north facing facade at the bottom of the picture. The ceiling decoration can be divided in seven separate strips. The central strip is adorned with repeating images of the vulture goddess Nekhbet. To the east (right-hand side of the picture) as well as to the west of the vultures there are three strips which display the actual astronomical images. The easternmost and westernmost strips have a large image of the sky goddess Nut whose body arches over the twelve constellations of the zodiac. The second strip east from centre displays amongst others the twelve hours of the day and their associated gods, whereas the second strip west from centre has the hours of the night. The first strip east from centre deals with the course of the sun while the first strip west from centre is concerned with the phases of the moon. The ceiling also displays two groups of socalled decans (36 stars that were used to tell the time of night.) One group (the Tanis family) can be found on the eastern- and westernmost strips. The other group (the Seti IB family) inhabits the second strip east from centre and west from centre. The grey squares indicate the positions of the columns. This drawing was made in 1799 by two engineers from Napoleon's army, Jollois and Devilliers, and was consequently published in 'La Description de 'Egypte'.

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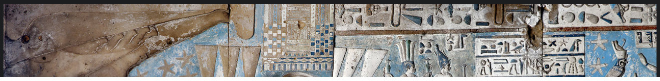
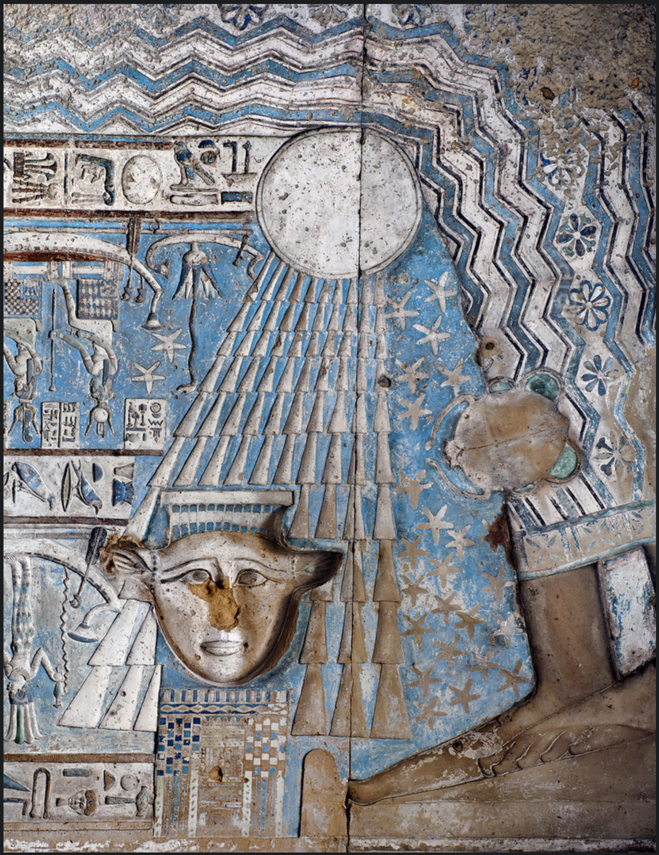


EASTERNMOST STRIP we see in its entirety. It is enveloped by the outstretched body of the sky goddess Nut. On the right she swallows a winged setting sun, which is reborn from her lap on the left during dawn. The wave pattern on Nut's dress symbolizes the cosmic river on which the sun has traveled during the night. The strip actually consists of two registers. The upper register has six zodiac signs: Cancer (between Nut's legs), Gemini, Taurus, Aries, Pisces and Aquarius. These sign are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. This register also has deities who portray the twelve hours of the night, the planets and some ancient Egyptian constellations. The corresponding other six sign of the zodiac can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip (see pictures 29584 till 29590). The lower register of the easternmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 18 till 35 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 1 till 17 and 36 can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip. For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



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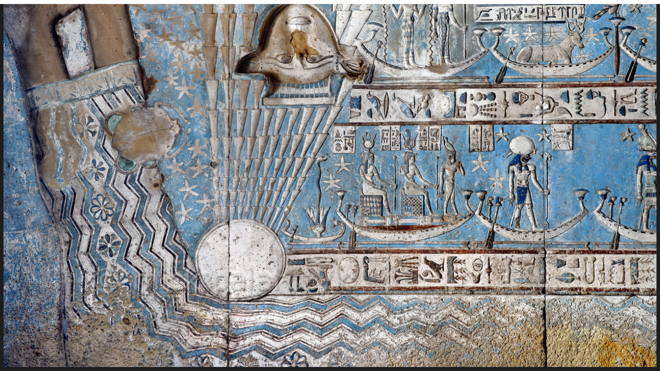
[EGYPT 29528] 'Birth of the sun in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The rising sun is born from the lap of sky goddess Nut on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The entire strip is enveloped by the outstretched body of the sky goddess Nut and her feet are visible in the right lower corner of this picture. The wave pattern on Nut's dress symbolizes the cosmic river on which the sun traveled during the night. The rays of the rising sun touch the head of the goddess Hathor which is located on top of a simplified image of a temple. The scene portrays the first day of the Egyptian New Year on which a statue of Hathor, brought from a crypt in the temple and placed on its roof, was rejuvenated by the first rays of the New Year sun. A similar scene can be found on the ceiling of the Wabet (see picture 29610). To the right of the sun rays we see Cancer, one of the six zodiac signs that are represented in this ceiling strip. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. To the left of the sun we see (upside down) a small boat carrying a lotus flower from



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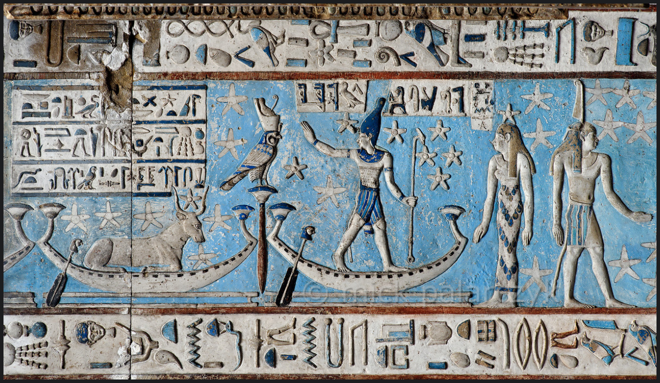
[EGYPT 29527] 'Birth of the sun in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The rising sun is born from the lap of sky goddess Nut on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The entire strip is enveloped by the outstretched body of the sky goddess Nut and her feet are visible in the left upper corner of this picture. The wave pattern on Nut's dress symbolizes the cosmic river on which the sun traveled during the night. The rays of the rising sun touch the head of the goddess Hathor which is located on top of a simplified image of a temple (seen upside down here). The scene portrays the first day of the Egyptian New Year on which a statue of Hathor, brought from a crypt in the temple and placed on its roof, was rejuvenated by the first rays of the New Year sun. To the left of the sun rays we see Cancer, one of the six zodiac signs that are represented in this ceiling strip. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC On the right we see the end of the two registers which make up the rest of this strip. The upper register starts with a boat carrying the standing goddesses Anukis and Satis, who represent a constellation south of the Ecliptic (the astronomical location is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera in the Louvre). Anukis, as personification of the Nile, is pouring water from two vessels. Satis, another water goddess, is wearing the crown of upper Egypt. This watery constellation is closely associated with the next heavenly body: Sothis (the star Sirius) depicted as a cow on a boat. The rise of Sirius on the eastern horizon, after a few weeks of invisibility, signaled the beginning of the summer Nile flood for the Egyptians and the beginning of the New Year. Next comes a constellation or star which is called 'Horus-who-is-on-his-pillar' and which is south of the Ecliptic (the astronomical location is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera in the Louvre.) The lower register starts with a small boat carrying a lotus flower from which emerges a snake. The snake is a symbol for the rising sun on the first day of the New Year, the lotus flower being the first object that appeared on the primordial sea on the first day of the world creation. It is similar to the famous image of the sun-snake in a cosmos-bulb which is found in the southern crypt of the temple (see pictures 29604-607). Next follows a boat with a seated Isis and Hathor and a standing Harsomptus, the three most important deities of the temple. The falcon-headed god on a boat to the right of that is a decanal star (nr. 35 in the Tanis decan family of Neugebauer and Parker). For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



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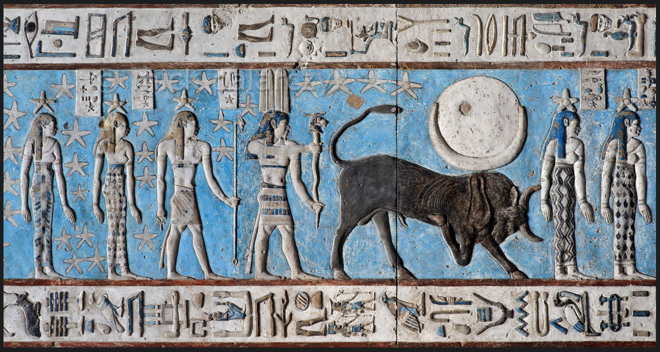
[EGYPT 29529] 'Sirius and Orion sailing across the sky at Dendera.' Sirius and Orion are sailing across the firmament in boats on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The star Sirius, or Sothis as it was known by the Egyptians, is depicted here as a reclining cow on a boat but the star was also which emerges a snake. The snake is a symbol for the rising sun on the first day of the New Year, the lotus flower being the first object that appeared on the primordial sea on the first day of the world creation. It is similar to the famous image of the sun-snake in a cosmos-bulb which is found in the southern crypt of the temple (see pictures 29604-607). For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29530] 'Zodiac sign Taurus at Dendera.' A black raging bull portrays the zodiac sign Taurus on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The animal seems to stoop under the weight of a big white moon. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire eastermost strip and the other six can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip of the hall. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. In this detail picture the bull of Taurus is followed by a god with a two-feather crown, holding a ram-headed serpent with both hands. He personifies a constellation or star north of the Ecliptic (the astronomical location is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera in the Louvre). Behind him, carrying a staff, is the planet Mercury (called 'Sebek' by the Egyptians). In a text dating from the New Kingdom Mercury was described as "Seth in the evening twilight and a god in the morning twilight." Proof that by that time Mercury was known as both evening and morning star. The women with stars on their heads on the left are the goddesses of the 11th and 10th hour of the night and the pair on the right are their colleagues of the 9th and 8th hour. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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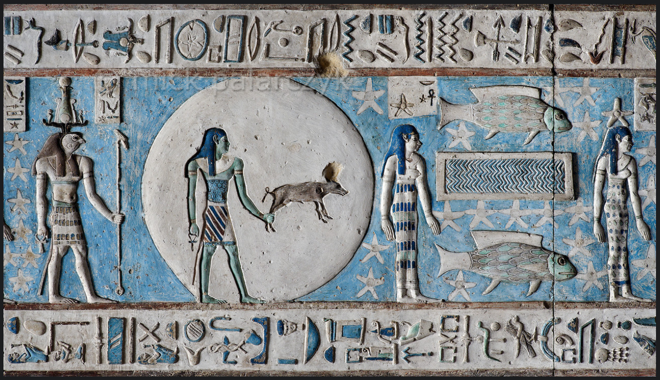

[EGYPT 29532] 'Zodiac sign Pisces at Dendera.' A fish on either side of a pond makes up the zodiac sign Pisces on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire easternmost strip and the other six can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip of the hall. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The standing women to the left and the right of the fish are the goddesses of the 5th and 4th hour of the night. The disk with a god holding a small pig by a hind foot is interpreted by some scholars as the sun being eclipsed, but this can't be proven. The falcon-headed god on the left is the planet Jupiter (called 'Horus-the-Mystery). For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk

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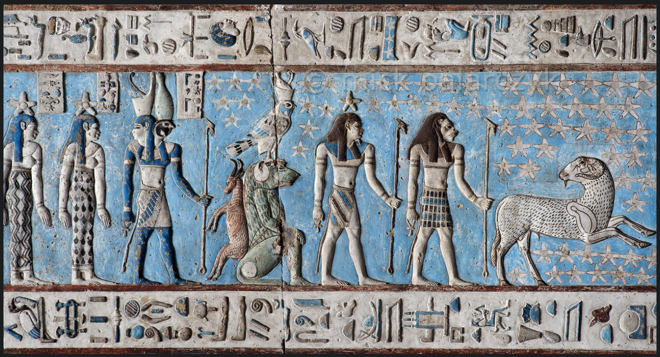
identified with the goddess Isis. The rise of Sirius on the eastern horizon, after a few weeks of invisibility, signaled the beginning of the summer Nile flood for the Egyptians and the beginning of the New Year. The second boat carries a god who personifies the constellation Orion, or Sahu as he was called by the Egyptians. The text above the god describes him as 'Sahu, the soul (ba) of Osiris' and thus it can be understood that Osiris is looking back at his wife Isis (in the shape of a cow) to see if she is following him across the sky. Orion/Osiris as a god looking back first appears in Egyptian iconography in stars clocks on coffin lids of the Middle Kingdom. Between the two boats there is a constellation or star which is called 'Horus-who-is-on-his-pillar' and which is south of the Ecliptic (the astronomical location is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera in the Louvre). The woman with a star on her head is the goddess of the 12th hour of the night. The man with a feather on his head is the god Shu, who was responsible for keeping the earth and the sky separated. The astronomers who designed this ceiling depicted him together with his sister Tefnut (who is just outside the picture) to represent the twins of the zodiac sign Gemini. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29531] 'Zodiac sign Aries at Dendera.' A jumping ram portrays the zodiac sign Aries on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire eastermost strip and the other six can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip of the hall. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The lion-headed god following the ram personifies a star or constellation south of the Ecliptic. North of the Ecliptic is the constellation made up of an oryx back to back with a baboon on whose head is perched a falcon. The astronomical location of both heavenly bodies is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera which is kept in the Louvre. The double-headed god personifies the planet Venus and is accompanied by the caption "The God of the Morning". The double head, though, is probably indicative of the knowledge that Venus could also be an evening star. The women with stars on their heads on the left are the goddesses of the 9th and 8th hour of the night. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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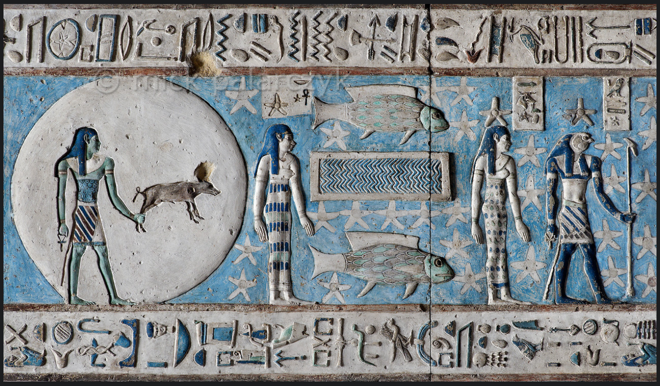

[EGYPT 29533] 'Zodiac sign Pisces at Dendera.' A fish on either side of a pond makes up the zodiac sign Pisces on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST

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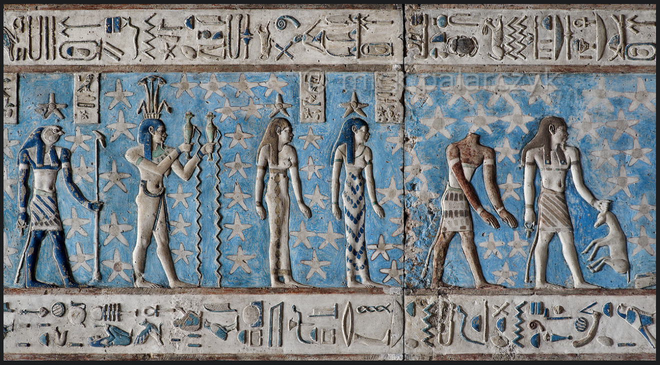

[EGYPT 29534] 'Zodiac sign Aquarius at Dendera.' Wearing a papyrus crown and pouring water from two vessels, the Nile-god Hapi personifies the zodiac sign Aquarius on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire easternmost strip and the other six can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip of the hall. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, but of course Hapy is present in Egyptian iconography much earlier. The falcon-headed god on the left is the planet Mars (called 'Horus-the-Red'). The standing women with stars above their heads are the goddesses of the third and second hour of the night. The headless human body personifies a star or constellation north of the Ecliptic. Also north of the Ecliptic is the constellation made up of an human-headed-god holding an oryx by the horns. The astronomical location of both heavenly bodies is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera which is kept in the Louvre. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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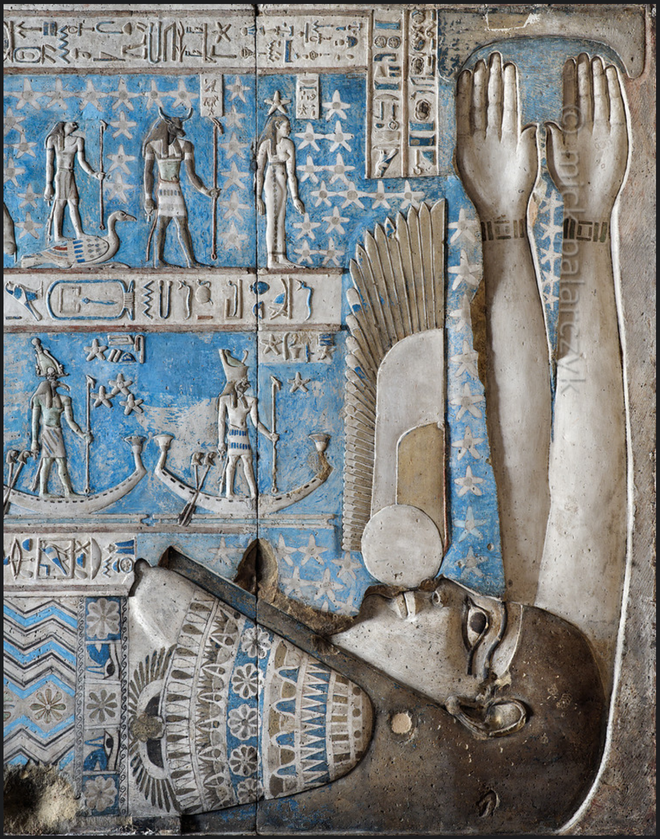

[EGYPT 29536] 'Setting of the sun in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' A winged setting sun is swallowed by the sky goddess Nut on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the southern end of the

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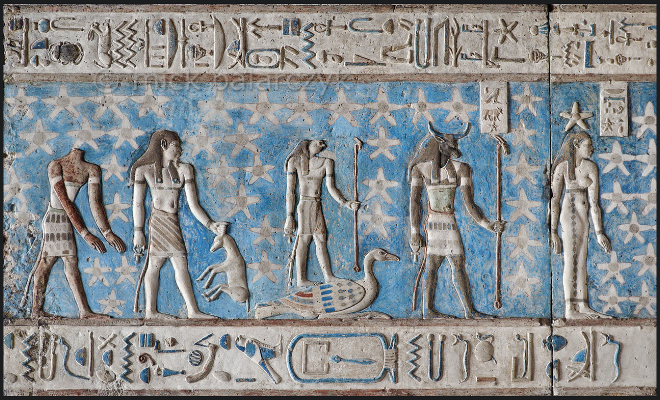
STRIP. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire easternmost strip and the other six can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip of the hall. These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The standing women to the left and the right of the fish are the goddesses of the 5th and 4th hour of the night. The disk with a god holding a small pig by a hind foot is interpreted by some scholars as the sun being eclipsed, but this can't be proven. The falcon-headed god on the right is the planet Mars (called 'Horus-the-Red). Other Egyptian astronomical texts mention that the god "travels backwards', which is undoubtedly an allusion to the retrograde movement of Mars. Of course other planets display this movement also, but maybe the Egyptians found it particularly striking in Mars. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29535] 'Bull-headed planet Saturn at Dendera.' A bull-headed god named 'Horus-Bull' personifies the planet Saturn on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The standing woman with a star on her head is the goddess of the first hour of the night. The headless human body personifies a star or constellation north of the Ecliptic. Also north of the Ecliptic is the constellation made up of an human-headed-god holding an oryx by the horns. North of the ecliptic as well is the falcon-headed god standing on a goose. The astronomical location of these three heavenly bodies is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera which is kept in the Louvre. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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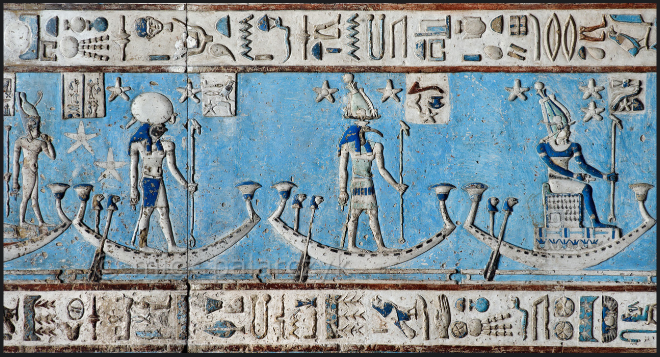

[EGYPT 29537] 'Decanal stars on boats in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Starry gods are sailing on boats across the firmament on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The seated human-headed god and the standing ibis-headed and falcon-headed gods are the decanal stars 33, 34 and 35. In fact, the lower register of the easternmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars

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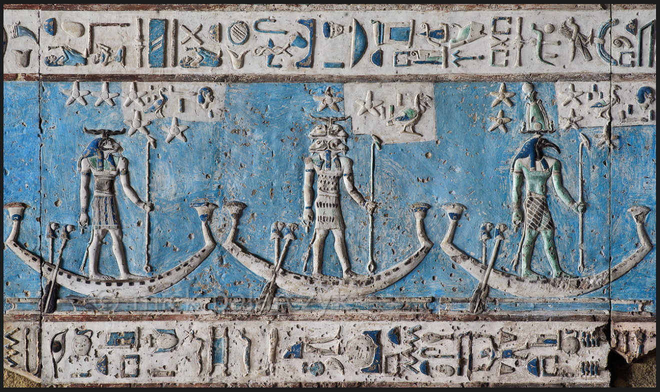
separate strips but here we are looking at the southern end of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The entire strip is enveloped by the outstretched body of the sky goddess Nut but we only see the upper part of her body in this picture. The wave pattern on Nut's dress (visible in the left lower corner) symbolizes the cosmic river on which the sun will travel during the night. On the left we see the beginning of the two registers which make up the rest of this strip. The upper register begins with a standing woman with a star on her head; she is the goddess of the first hour of the night. The bull-headed god named 'Horus-Bull' personifies the planet Saturn. The falcon-headed god standing on a goose personifies a star or constellation north of the Ecliptic (the astronomical location is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera which is kept in the Louvre). The lower register has a falcon-headed god and an ibis-headed god in boats. These are the decanal stars nr 18 and 19. In fact, the lower register of the easternmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 18 till 35 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 1 till 17 and 36 can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip. For an overview of the ceiling strip of which a detail is portrayed in this photo, see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29538] 'Decanal stars on boats in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Starry gods are sailing on boats across the firmament on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the EASTERNMOST STRIP. The ram-headed god, the god with four ram heads and the ibis-headed god are the decanal stars 25, 24 and 23. In fact, the lower register of the easternmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 18 till 35 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 1 till 17 and 36 can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip. For an overview of the ceiling strip of which a detail is portrayed in this photo, see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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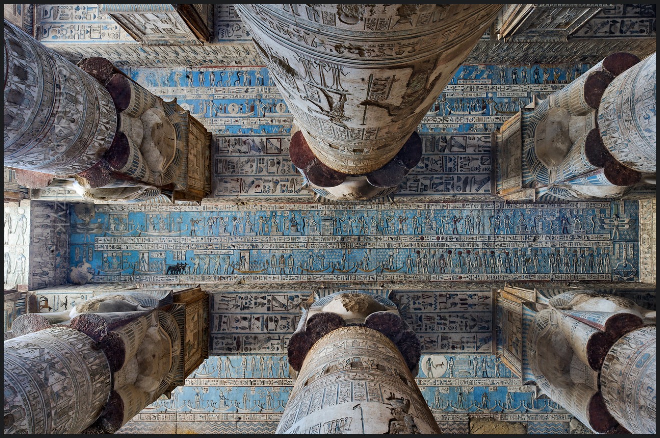
can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 18 till 35 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 1 till 17 and 36 can be found on the westernmost ceiling strip. For an overview of the ceiling strip of which a detail is portrayed in this photo, see picture 29526. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29539] 'Recently restored Astronomical Ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Looking up in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera gives you a dazzling view of the astronomical ceiling, that was restored between 2006 and 2011. It is a mysterious world inhabited by star gods and zodiac signs but also by weirder creatures such as snakes on tall legs and birds with human heads. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips, which are conspicuous by their bright blue colour, that was invisible under a layer of soot before the restoration. Here we see the three strips east from centre. The Second Strip East from centre we see in its entirety in this picture. It consists of a lower and upper register. The lower register is in its right-hand part inhabited by the goddesses of the twelve hours of the day and their associated deities. In the middle and left-hand part of the register the sun, moon, Sirius, Orion and Venus are sailing across the sky in their boats. The upper register begins and ends with a representation of one of the four winds. On the left are two boats carrying Isis, Osiris, Ra and Harsomptus. The rest is filled with personifications of decanal stars. The decans of Egyptian astronomy were 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 1, 2 and 21 till 36 of the Seti I B decan family. Stars 3 till 20 can be found on the second strip west from centre (see pictures 29572 and 29573.) For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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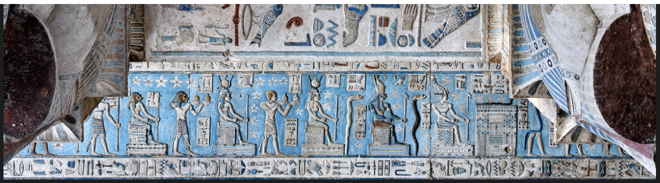

[EGYPT 29540] 'Architrave of astronomical ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' An architrave supporting the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is decorated with superbly crafted hieroglyphs. The falcon within a square is the hieroglyphic sign for the patron goddess of the temple: Hathor. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips which are supported by six rows of columns with architraves (for an overview see pictures 29525 and 29539). The architrave in this picture is located between the first and second strip east from the central ceiling strip. At the bottom of the picture we see, against a bright blue background, starry deities from the upper register of the second strip east from central (for a detail see photo 29546). The top of the picture shows the lower register of the first strip east from central (for a detail see photo 29558). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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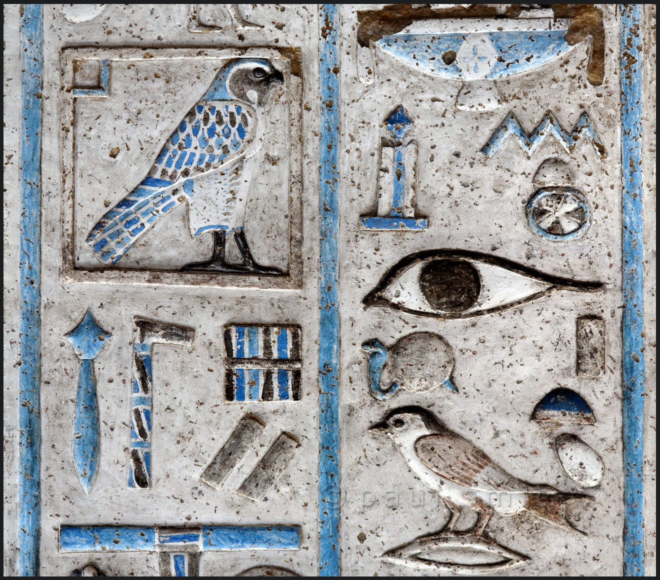

[EGYPT 29542] 'Hieroglyphs in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' An architrave supporting the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is decorated with superbly crafted hieroglyphs. The falcon within a square is the hieroglyphic sign for the patron goddess of the temple: Hathor. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips which are supported by six rows of columns with architraves (for an overview see pictures 29525 and 29539). The architrave in this picture is located between the first and second strip east from the central ceiling strip. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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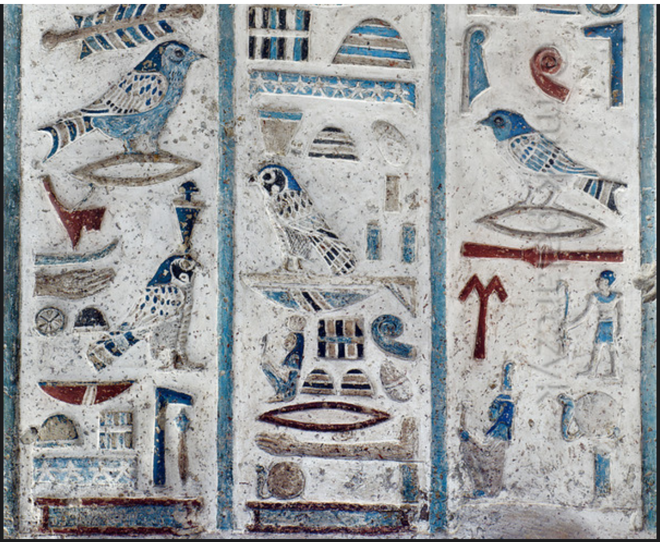

[EGYPT 29541] 'Architrave of astronomical ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' An architrave supporting the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is decorated with superbly crafted hieroglyphs. The falcon within a square is the hieroglyphic sign for the patron goddess of the temple: Hathor. In the central column the group of five signs below her name mention that she is the master of Junet (the Egyptian name for Dendera). The falcon placed above three vertical signs in the upper left corner spells the name of Harsomptus, the child-god who was parented by Hathor of Dendera and Horus of Edfu. The name 'Horus of Behdet' (Edfu) is spelled lower down in the same column by a falcon and the four signs to the left of it. He also appears in the right upper corner, but in this case 'Behdet' is written below the falcon. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips which are supported by six rows of columns with architraves (for an overview see pictures 29525 and 29539). The architrave in this picture is located between the first and second strip east from the central ceiling strip (see picture 29540). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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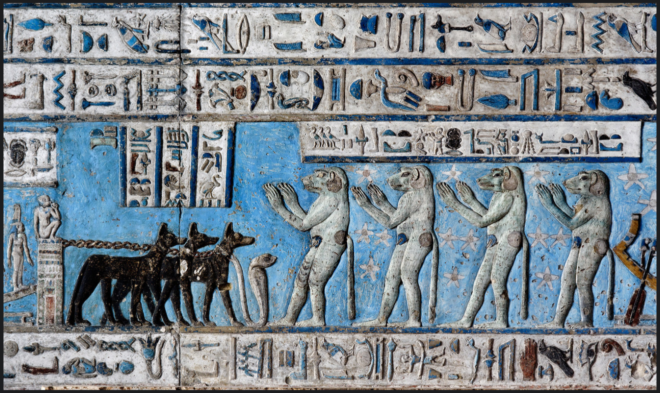

[EGYPT 29543] 'Baboons worshipping the rising sun at Dendera.' Four baboons are welcoming and worshipping the rising sun on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. Near the left edge of the picture we can just discern the bow of a boat which carries the image of a seated child. This boat carries the rising sun (which is outside the frame of the picture) and is pulled into the eastern sky by three black jackals (called "The Justified"). Four standing baboons await the sun in a worshipping position. The caption over their heads calls them the "Souls of the East". Baboons were observed by ancient Egyptians to screech at the rising sun, warming themselves in its rays, and this probably formed the inspiration for this favourite scene in Egyptian iconography. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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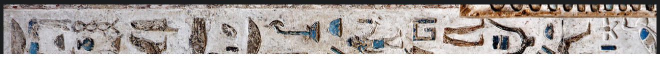

[EGYPT 29544] 'Sun god sailing across the sky at Dendera.' The sun god Ra is sailing across the sky on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. The sun, depicted in his falcon-headed form of Ra-Horakhty ('Ra who is Horus of the Horizons'), is standing in a shrine on his sun-bark. Behind him, the helmsman is manipulating the steering oars. Near the bow a falcon-headed god is spearing Apophis, the big snake that is the archenemy of Ra (only his hieroglyphic signs are shown here, lurking in the water.) The spear bearer is followed by Maat (the goddess of truth) , Isis and Sia (the personification of knowledge). The bark is pulled over the heavenly river by three men, only one of which is visible in this picture. A text placed above them designates them as "Stars that accompany the sun in the southern sky." On the left baboons worship another boat which transports the rising sun (not visible in this picture). The caption over their heads calls them the "Souls of the East". Baboons were observed by ancient Egyptians to screech at the rising sun, warming themselves in its rays, and this probably formed the inspiration for this favourite scene in Egyptian iconography. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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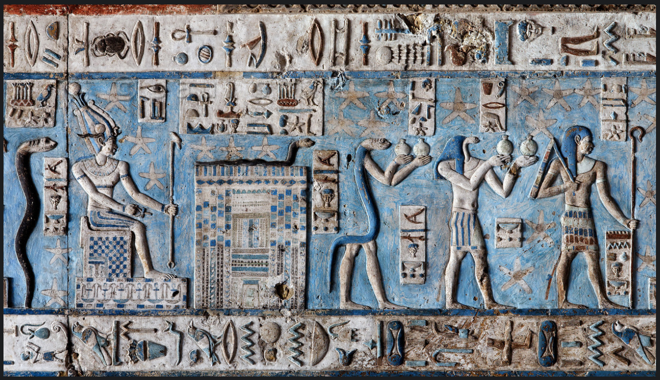

[EGYPT 29546] 'Starry snakes at Dendera.' Snakes in all kind of weird forms populate the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the long legged blue serpent represents decan number 36 and is paired off with ebony and gold. The serpent-headed god next to him is decan no. 35 and is associated with gold. The human-headed god, no. 34a, is coupled with quartz and gold. Behind the blue snake are some extra decans that could be used during the last five days of the year (which were not covered by the normal 36 decans.) The snake on the pedestal is associated with ebony and gold. Osiris, seated on a throne, apparently can't be bothered with minerals, since none is mentioned. The standing black snake, however, opts for ebony and gold. In ancient Egypt snakes personified forces of both renewal and destruction. They could for instance symbolize the rising sun and were seen as the souls of gods but could also be demons, such as the monstrous water snake Apophis, who is eternally threatening the voyage of sun god Ra. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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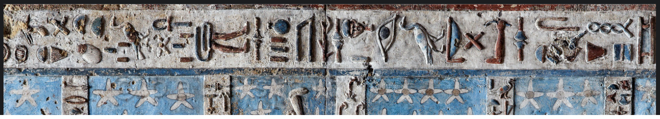

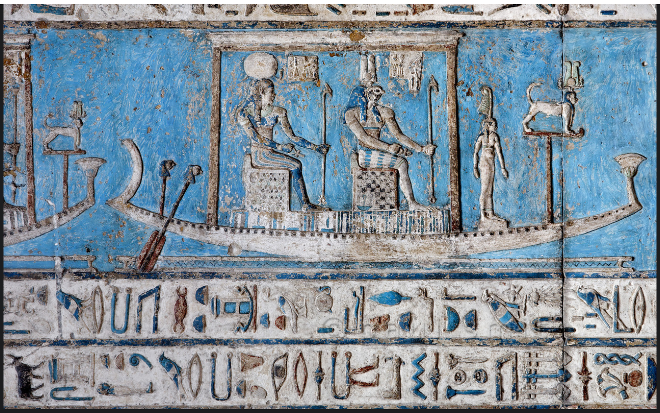

[EGYPT 29545] 'Harsomptus and Ra sailing across the sky at Dendera.' Seated on thrones, the sun god Ra (crowned by a disc) and Harsomptus are sailing across the sky on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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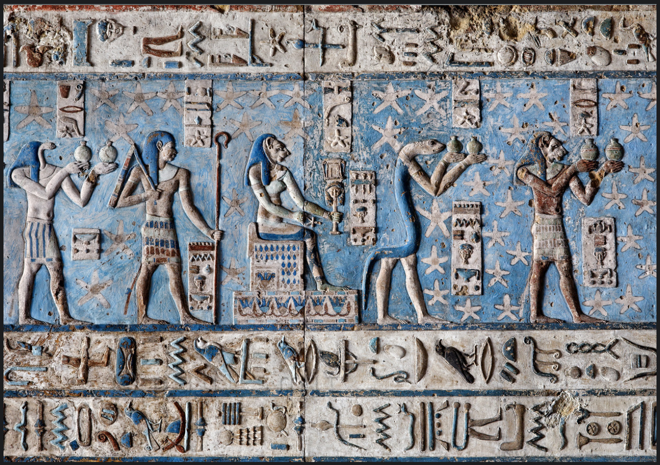

[EGYPT 29547] 'Stars, gods and minerals at Dendera.' Lined up against a starry background these colourful deities inhabit the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the serpent-headed god on the left is decan no. 35 and is associated with gold. The human-headed god, no. 34a, is coupled with quartz and gold. The seated lion-headed goddess (no. 34) presides over glass and gold. The long legged blue snake (no.33) watches over quartz and gold, while the lion-headed figure on the right (no. 32) is associated with granite and gold. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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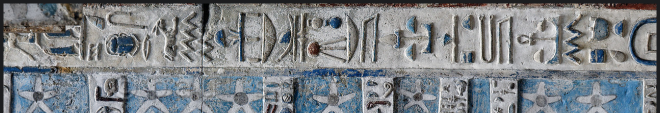

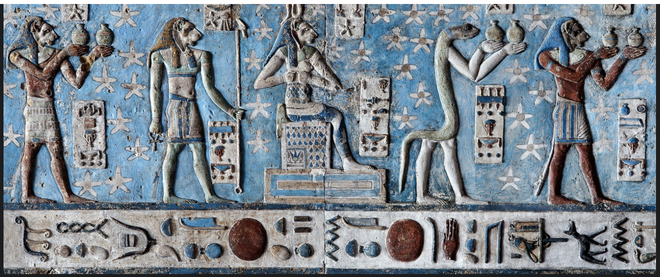

[EGYPT 29548] 'Stars, gods and minerals at Dendera.' Lined up against a starry background these colourful deities inhabit the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the lion-headed god on the left (decan no. 32) is associated with granite and gold. The lion-headed god (no. 31a) next to him is coupled with glass and gold. The seated lion-headed goddess (no. 31) presides over carnelian and gold. The long legged green snake (no. 30) watches over glass and gold, while the lion-headed figure on the right (no. 29) is the proud owner of some red jasper and gold. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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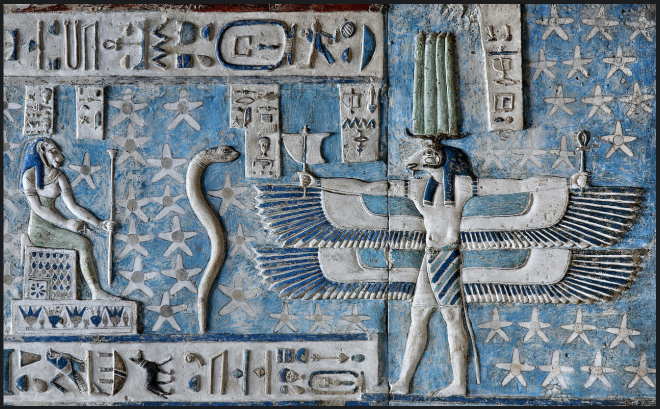

[EGYPT 29550] 'Good wind from the South at Dendera.' Representing the south wind, a ram-headed creature with double outstretched wings, holding a little sail and the 'ankh' sign of life, can be found on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the southern end of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. A caption near the head of the wind figure proclaims him to be "the good wind from the south". Wind creatures such as these only appear in Egyptian monuments of the Greek-Roman period. The lion-headed goddess and the snake are decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near each figure. Thus the seated lion-headed goddess (decan no. 22) is associated with carnelian and gold, while the erect white serpent (no. 21) is coupled with dark flint and gold. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during theRoman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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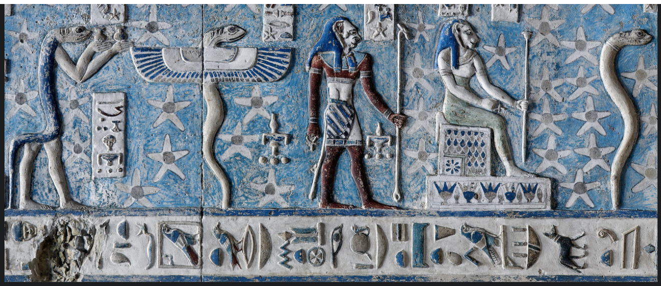

[EGYPT 29549] 'Snakes, stars, and minerals at Dendera.' Lined up against a starry background these colourful deities inhabit the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the long legged snake on the left (decan no. 24) is associated with garnet and gold. The winged serpent (no. 23) and lion-headed god (no. 22a) are both coupled with silver. The seated lion-headed goddess (no. 22) watches over a treasure of carnelian and gold, while the erect white serpent (no. 21)is associated with dark flint and gold. In ancient Egypt snakes personified forces of renewal as well as of destruction. They could for instance symbolize the rising sun and were seen as the souls of gods but could also be demons, such as the monstrous water snake Apophis, who is eternally threatening the voyage of sun god Ra. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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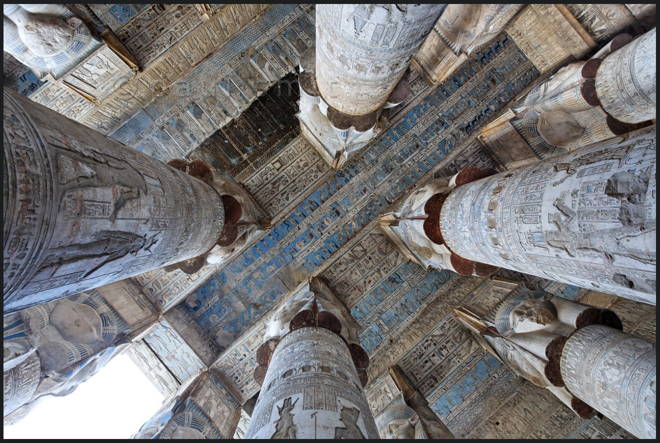
Temple was built during theRoman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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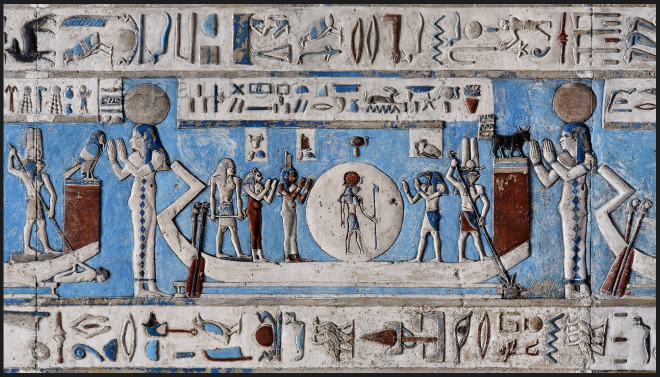
[EGYPT 29552] 'Astronomical ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Looking up in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera gives you a dazzling view of the astronomical ceiling. It is a mysterious world inhabited by star gods and zodiac signs but also by weirder creatures such as snakes on tall legs and birds with human heads. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips, which are conspicuous by their bright blue colour. Here we see, in the upper left corner, the central strip, where the layer of black soot, that until recently covered the entire ceiling, has only been partly cleaned away. The rest of the picture shows the three ceiling strips which are located east from the central one. The FIRST STRIP EAST from centre we see in its entirety in this photo. It is dedicated to the daily course of the sun (and so mirrors the subject of the first strip west from centre which deals with the moon and its phases). It consists of three registers separated by bands of text. In the middle register the sun is traveling across the sky during the twelve hours of the day. For every hour the sun is depicted in its bark, with a goddess, crowned by a sun disk, standing in adoration before its bow. The voyage starts at the left side where the sun god, just after its birth in the morning, is portrayed as a child during the first hour of the day. The lower and upper registers of this ceiling strip are inhabited by deities who protect the sun during its voyage. For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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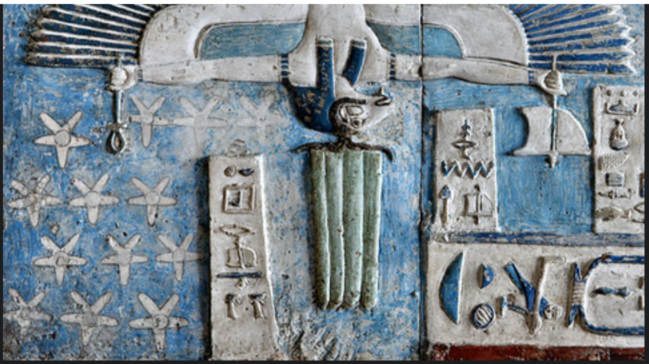
[EGYPT 29554] 'The sun in its bark at Dendera.' Enveloped by the disc of the sun, the sun god Ra is traveling across the sky in his solar bark on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the middle register of the FIRST STRIP EAST from centre. The whole of this register deals with the daily voyage of the sun god and for everyone of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark, with a goddess, crowned by a sun disk, standing in adoration before its bow. The text band below and above this register amongst others mentions that Ra " travels with a joyful heart", that he is "King of Time" and "he guides the heart to fulfill itself". This picture shows Ra's voyage during the fifth hour of the day. On either side of the sun disc, Isis and Thoth are standing in adoration. Behind Isis is the cat-headed goddess Bastet. Near the stern of the boat a pilot is manipulating the two steering oars. Near the bow a falcon-headed god is spearing a turtle, symbol of the evil spirited god Seth. At the left-hand edge of the picture we see a similar falcon-headed god, standing in the bow of the sun bark of the fourth hour. He is spearing a man who belongs to one



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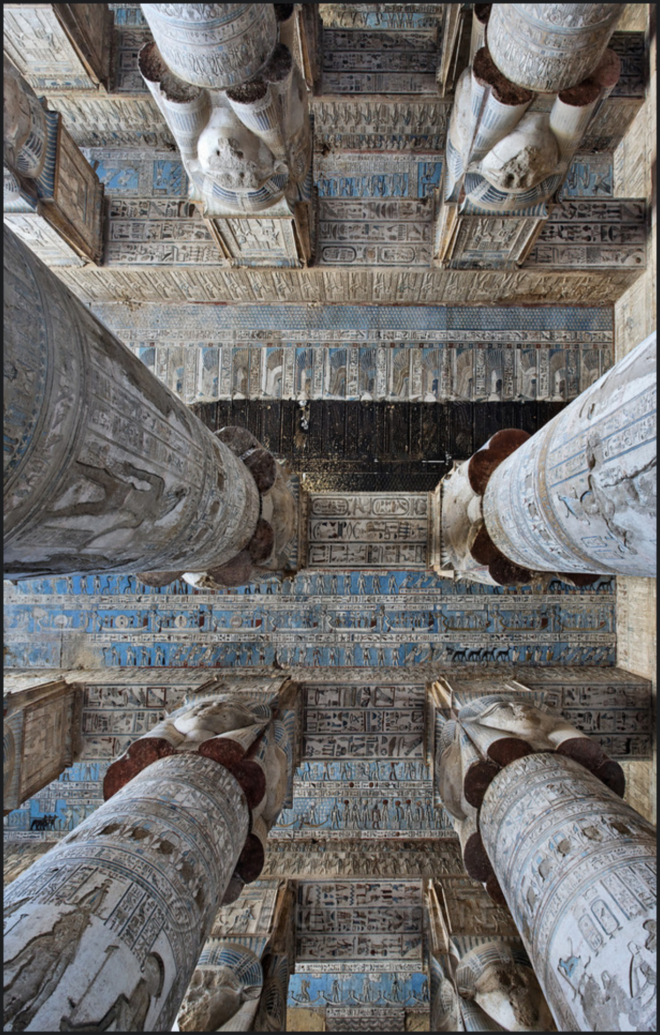
[EGYPT 29551] 'Goddess supporting the sky at Dendera.' A goddess is supporting the sky with raised arms on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. A winged sun disk hovers above it. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the southern end of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP EAST from centre. The goddess is one of the four goddesses of the cardinal points of the compass who support the heavens. This one is associated with the south or, as the caption states, with the position of the sun during noon. She is appropriately accompanied by the south wind in the upper register (seen upside down here): a ram-headed creature with double outstretched wings, holding a little sail and the 'ankh' sign of life. A caption near the head of the wind figure proclaims him to be "the good wind from the south". Wind creatures such as these only appear in Egyptian monuments of the Greek-Roman period (see also picture 29550). For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29539. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during theRoman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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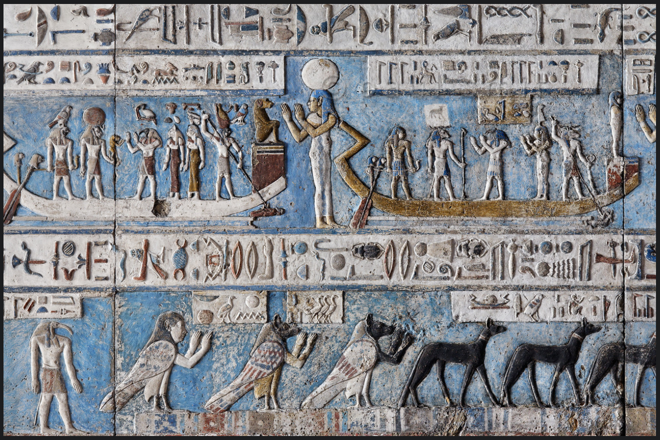
[EGYPT 29553] 'Astronomical ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Looking up in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera gives you a dazzling view of of the sun bark of the fourth hour. He is spearing a man who belongs to one of the traditional enemies of Egypt. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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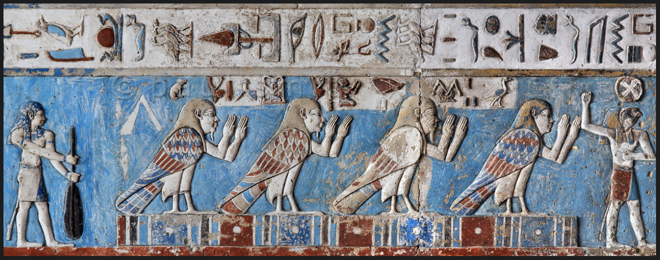
[EGYPT 29556] 'The sun in its bark at Dendera.' Portrayed during the ninth and tenth hour of the day Ra is traveling across the sky in his solar bark on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the middle and lower register of the FIRST STRIP EAST from centre. The whole of the middle register deals with the daily voyage of the sun god and for everyone of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark, with a goddess, crowned by a sun disk, standing in adoration before its bow. The text band below and above this register amongst others mentions that Ra " travels with a joyful heart", that he is "King of Time" and "he guides the heart to fulfill itself". This picture shows Ra's voyage during the ninth and tenth hour of the day. During the ninth hour (on the left) he has the head of a lion and is crowned by a sun disc. Before him stands Thoth in a worshipping position, followed by the cat-headed Bastet and a goddess who is crowned by a wadjet eye. Near the stern of the boat a falcon-headed pilot is manipulating the two steering oars. Near the bow a falcon-headed Horus is spearing a man who belongs to one of the traditional enemies of Egypt. During the tenth hour (on the right) the sun god has the head of a ram. Before him stands Thoth in a worshipping position, followed by the goddess of truth, Maat. Near the bow a ram-headed god is spearing a donkey who is also kept on a chain. The donkey is a symbolical animal for the evil spirited Seth. The lower register of this ceiling strip is inhabited by deities who protect or help the sun during its voyage. The black jackals on the right are called "Sailors of the sun-bark". Next to them are three 'ba' souls in the form of a human-headed and jackal-headed birds with human arms making a worshipping gesture. They are called "Souls of the first day of the month". For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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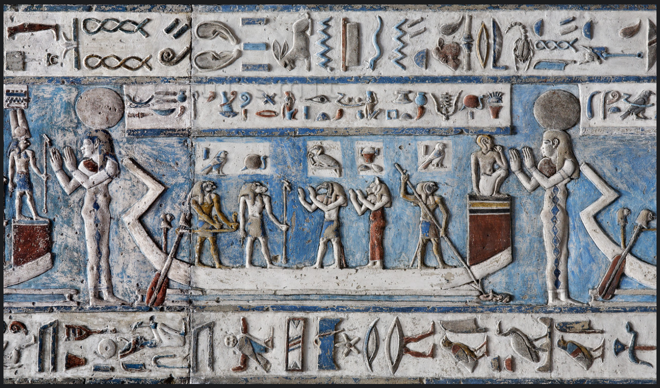
[EGYPT 29558] 'Ba souls on the astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Four souls in the form of human-headed birds inhabit the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the FIRST STRIP EAST from centre. This ceiling strip deals with the daily voyage of the sun god across the sky and for everyone of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark (see pictures 29554 - 29556). The lower register of this strip is inhabited by figures who protect or help the sun during its voyage, such as the sailor holding an oar and the four bird-souls in this picture. Egyptian ideas about the afterlife were complex. A deceased person would not simple become a single soul, but several different spiritual entities. There was for instance the 'ka', that could be nurtured with food and beverages during offerings. Another was the 'akh' an enlightened spirit that woke up in a

the astronomical ceiling. It is a mysterious world inhabited by star gods and zodiac signs but also by weirder creatures such as snakes on tall legs and birds with human heads. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips, which are conspicuous by their bright blue colour. Here we see, just above the middle of the picture, the central ceiling strip, where the layer of black soot, that until recently covered the entire ceiling, has only been partly cleaned away. Above that we see part of the first and second strip west from centre. The lower half of the picture is filled with parts of the three strips east from centre. The first strip east from centre we see most clearly in this picture, as it is not obscured by columns. It consist of three registers. The middle register deals with the daily voyage of the sun god across the sky. For every one of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark, with a goddess, crowned by a sun disk, standing in adoration before its bow. The lower and upper registers of this ceiling strip are inhabited by deities who protect the sun during its voyage, which progresses from left to right. For a more complete overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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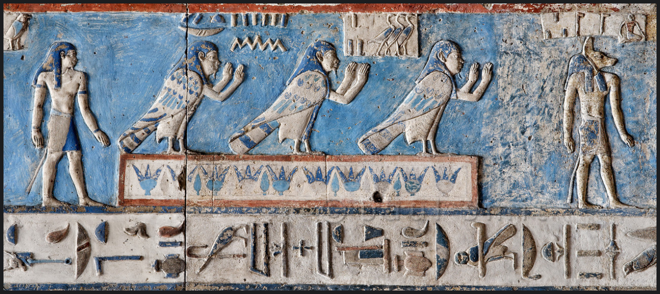
[EGYPT 29555] 'The sun in its bark at Dendera.' Worshipped by an ibis-headed Thoth and a cat-headed Bastet, Ra (with dog head) is traveling across the sky in his solar bark on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the middle register of the FIRST STRIP EAST from centre. The whole of this register deals with the daily voyage of the sun god and for everyone of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark, with a goddess, crowned by a sun disk, standing in adoration before its bow. The text band below and above this register amongst others mentions that Ra " travels with a joyful heart", that he is "King of Time" and the "he guides the heart to fulfill itself". This picture shows Ra's voyage during the eight hour of the day. Near the stern of the boat a pilot is manipulating the two steering oars. Near the bow a falcon-headed Horus is spearing the water snake Apophis, the archenemy of Ra. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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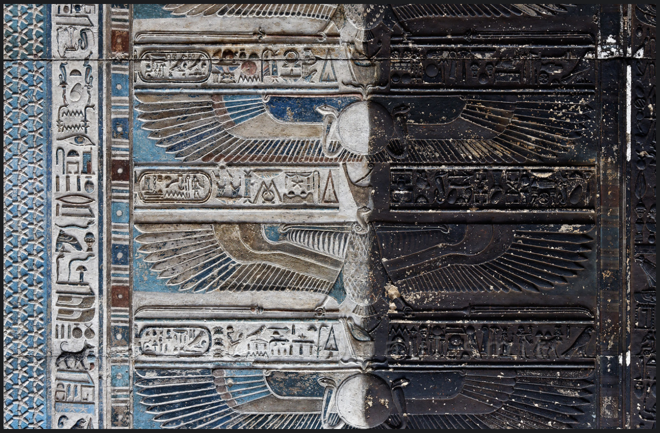
[EGYPT 29557] 'Ba souls on the astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Three souls in the form of human-headed birds inhabit the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the FIRST STRIP EAST from centre. This ceiling strip deals with the daily voyage of the sun god across the sky and for everyone of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark (see pictures 29554 - 29556). The lower register of this strip is inhabited by figures who protect or help the sun during its voyage, such as the three bird-souls in this picture. Egyptian ideas about the afterlife were complex. A deceased person would not simple become a single soul during offerings. Another was the 'ach' an enlightened spirit that woke up in a kind of earthly paradise during the night and that in bodily form could perform ordinary tasks such as farming. And then there was the 'ba', a soul that could roam about in the real world during daytime in the form of a bird. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



[EGYPT 29560] 'Partly cleaned vulture goddess Nekhbet in Dendera's Hathor Temple.' Images of a winged solar disc and the vulture goddess Nekhbet are alternately displayed on the CENTRAL STRIP of the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. A thick layer layer of soot and dust, which had attached itself to the ceiling over the centuries, has recently been cleaned away. However, half of the central strip has been left uncleaned, which stresses the contrast between after and before the cleaning process. For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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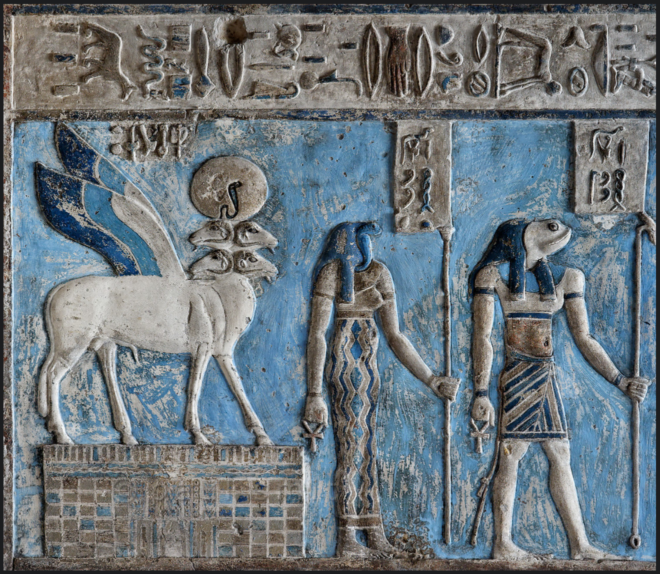

[EGYPT 29562] 'South wind on astronomical ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' A winged ram with four heads personifies the south wind on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. Wind figures such as these only appear in Egyptian monuments of the Greek-Roman period. On the right we see the frog-headed god Heh and the snake-headed goddess Hehet, who are personifications of infinity. They belong to the eight gods (Ogdoad) who ruled the cosmos before the creation of the world, according to the cosmology which was developed in the city Hermopolis. There were four pairs of frog- and snake-headed male/female gods symbolizing the primeval waters, darkness, invisibility and infinity. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The deities in this picture form part of a panel that deals with the full moon and which is located at the southern end of the strip. For an overview of the entire strip see picture 29561. Elsewhere on the ceiling there is another representation of the south

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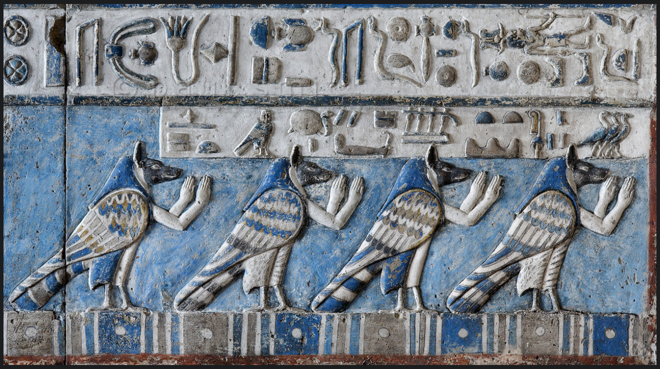
were complex. A deceased person would not simple become a single soul, but several different spiritual entities. There was for instance the 'ka', that could be nurtured with food and beverages during offerings. Another was the 'ach' an enlightened spirit that woke up in a kind of earthly paradise during the night and that in bodily form could perform ordinary tasks such as farming. And then there was the 'ba', a soul that could roam about in the real world during daytime in the form of a bird. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



[EGYPT 29559] 'Ba souls on the astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Four souls in the form of jackal-headed birds with human arms inhabit the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the FIRST STRIP EAST from centre. This ceiling strip deals with the daily voyage of the sun god across the sky and for everyone of the twelve hours the sun is depicted in its bark (see pictures 29554 - 29556). The lower register of this strip is inhabited by figures who protect or help the sun during its voyage, such as the four bird-souls in this picture. The caption above their heads reads: "The western souls greet the sun while it sets", which is appropriate because these birds are placed near the end of the register, alongside the 12th bark, which (in the middle register) carries the setting sun. For an overview of this ceiling strip see picture 29552. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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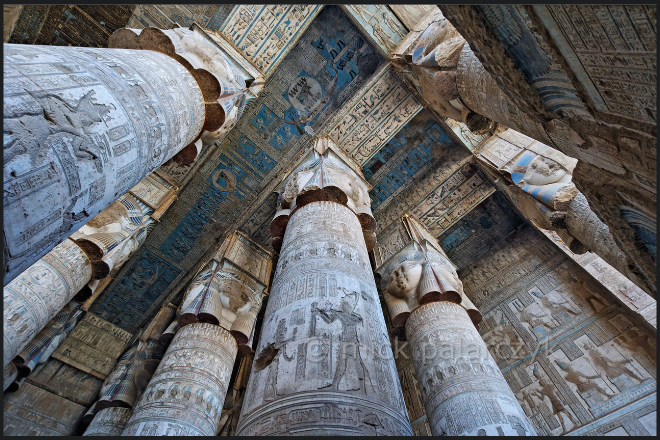

[EGYPT 29561] 'Astronomical ceiling in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Looking up in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera gives you a dazzling view of the astronomical ceiling. It is a mysterious world inhabited by star gods and zodiac signs but also by weirder creatures such as snakes on tall legs and birds with human heads. The astronomical ceiling consists in total of seven separate strips, which are conspicuous by their bright blue colour. Here we are looking at the three ceiling strips which are located west from the central one. The FIRST STRIP WEST from centre we see in its entirety in this photo. It is dedicated to the moon and its phases and so mirrors the subject of the first strip east from centre which deals with the course of the sun (see pictures 29552-29559). The moon strip is divided in three separate panels. The one to the north (near the upper edge of the picture) is dedicated to the waning moon, the middle panel deals with the waxing moon and the one in the south is about the full moon. For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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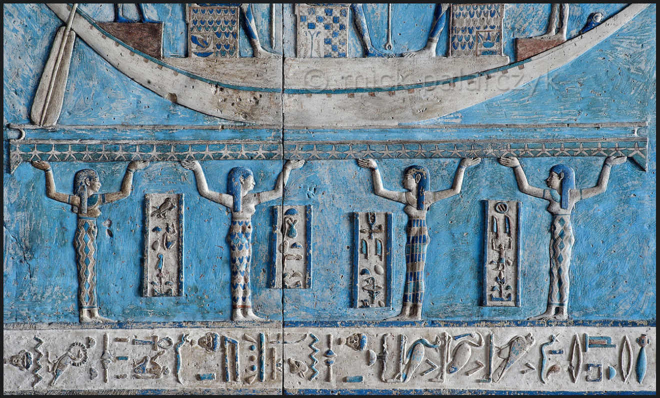
29561. Elsewhere on the ceiling there is another representation of the south wind, for this see picture 29550. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



[EGYPT 29564] 'Goddesses supporting the sky at Dendera.' The four goddesses of the cardinal points carry the star filled sky on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The deities in this picture form part of a panel that deals with the full moon and which is located at the southern end of the strip. At the top of the picture we can see the lower part of the boat which carries Osiris as personification of the full moon across the sky (see also photo 29563). The four goddesses who support the sky are associated with the compass points west, north, south and east (from left to right). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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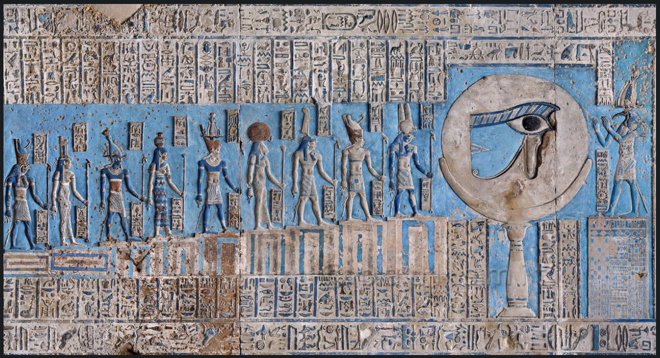

[EGYPT 29566] 'The waxing moon and the Eye of Horus at Dendera.' This forceful image of the moon on a pillar, decorated with the "healed eye" of Horus, can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The deities in this picture form part of a panel that deals with the waxing moon and which is located at the middle of the strip. According to Egyptian mythology Horus lost his eye during a battle with Seth (the murderer of his father Osiris) and the eye (called 'Wadjet') was subsequently healed by Thoth, who is portrayed at the right-hand side of the picture. The destruction and healing of the eye was symbolically coupled by the ancient Egyptians to the waning and waxing of the moon. To the left of the moon are 14 stairs (of which only 9 are visible in this picture) with gods who refer to the 14 days leading up to the full "healed" moon. From right to left they are Min (1), Atum (2), Shu (3), Tefnut (4), Geb (5), Nut (6), Osiris (7), Isis (8) and Horus (9). The other five are outside the frame of this picture but can be seen in photo 29565. For an overview of the entire ceiling strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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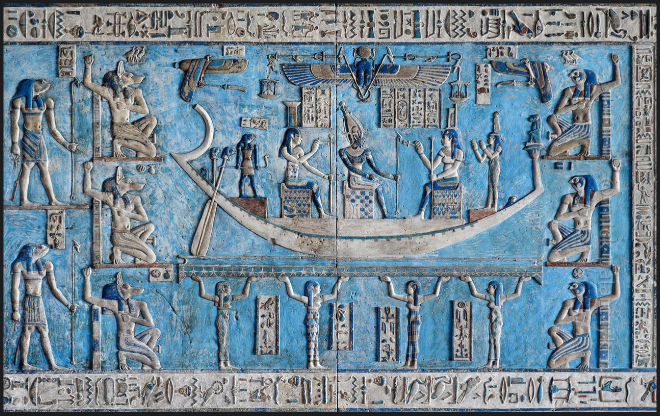

[EGYPT 29563] 'Osiris as personification of the moon at Dendera.' Seated on a throne Osiris sails across the sky as personification of the full moon on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The deities in this picture form part of a panel that deals with the full moon and which is located at the southern end of the strip. Osiris is accompanied by the seated goddesses Nephtys (left) and Isis, while Maat stands near the bow of the ship. The caption above the ship tells us that Osiris has entered the eye of the moon on the 15th day of the month (that is, during full moon). The starry sky on which the moon boat sails is supported by the four goddesses of the cardinal points (from left to right): west, north, south and east. The kneeling falcon-headed figures on the right are the Souls of Pe and those kneeling on the left, with jackal heads, are the Souls of Nekhen. The Souls of Pe (a town in Lower Egypt) and Nekhen (a town in Upper Egypt) represent the mythological ancestral kings of Egypt from the predynastic period. They were seen as guardians of Lower and Upper Egypt and were thought to walk beside the pharaoh as spirits during certain festivals. On the far left we see two frog-headed gods who belong to the Ogdoad (eight gods) of Hermopolis and who ruled the cosmos before the creation of the world. The upper one personifies the primeval waters and the lower one is associated with darkness. For an overview of the entire strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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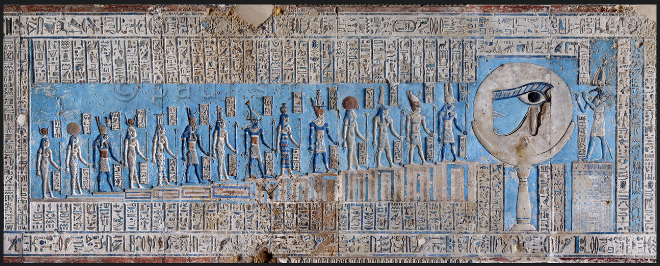

[EGYPT 29565] 'The waxing moon and the Eye of Horus at Dendera.' This forceful image of the moon on a pillar, decorated with the "healed eye" of Horus, can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The deities in this picture form part of a panel that deals with the waxing moon and which is located at the middle of the strip. According to Egyptian mythology Horus lost his eye during a battle with Seth (the murderer of his father Osiris) and the eye (called 'Wadjet') was subsequently healed by Thoth, who is portrayed at the right-hand side of the picture. The destruction and healing of the eye was symbolically coupled by the ancient Egyptians to the waning and waxing of the moon. To the left of the moon are 14 stairs with gods who refer to the 14 days leading up to the full "healed" moon. From right to left they are Min (1), Atum (2), Shu (3), Tefnut (4), Geb (5), Nut (6), Osiris (7), Isis (8), Horus (9), Nephtys (10), Hathor (11), Horus (12), Tanenet (13) and Iunit (14). For an overview of the entire strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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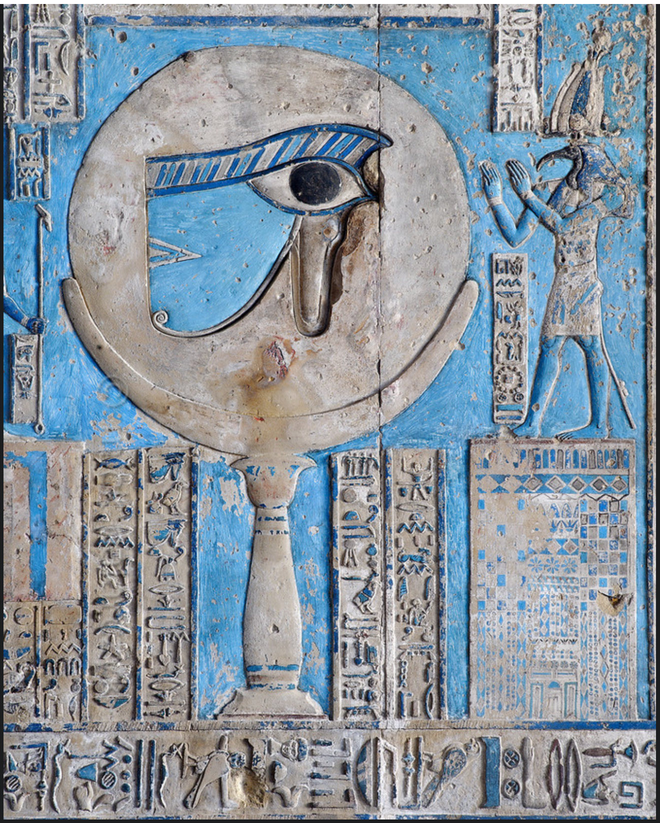

[EGYPT 29568] 'The waxing moon and the Eye of Horus at Dendera.' This forceful image of the moon on a pillar, decorated with the "healed eye" of Horus, can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The moon eye is part of a panel that deals with the waxing moon and which is located at the middle of the strip. According to Egyptian mythology Horus lost his eye during a battle with Seth (the murderer of his father Osiris) and the eye (called 'Wadjet') was subsequently healed by Thoth, who is portrayed at the right-hand side of the picture. The destruction and healing of the eye was symbolically coupled by the ancient Egyptians to the waning and waxing of the moon. To the left of the moon are 14 stairs (outside the frame of the picture) with gods who refer to the 14 days leading up to the full "healed" moon. The entire scene can be seen in photo 29565. For an overview of the entire ceiling strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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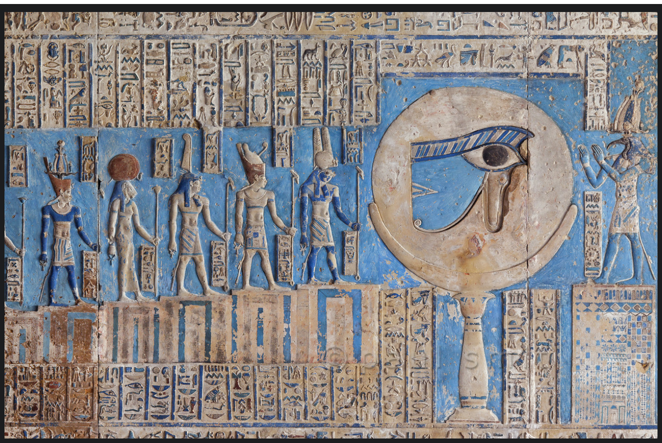

[EGYPT 29567] 'The waxing moon and the Eye of Horus at Dendera.' This forceful image of the moon on a pillar, decorated with the "healed eye" of Horus, can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The deities in this picture form part of a panel that deals with the waxing moon and which is located at the middle of the strip. According to Egyptian mythology Horus lost his eye during a battle with Seth (the murderer of his father Osiris) and the eye (called 'Wadjet') was subsequently healed by Thoth, who is portrayed at the right-hand side of the picture. The destruction and healing of the eye was symbolically coupled by the ancient Egyptians to the waning and waxing of the moon. To the left of the moon are 14 stairs (of which only 5 are visible in this picture) with gods who refer to the 14 days leading up to the full "healed" moon. From right to left they are Min (1), Atum (2), Shu (3), Tefnut (4) and Geb (5). The other nine are outside the frame of this picture but can be seen in photo 29565. For an overview of the entire ceiling strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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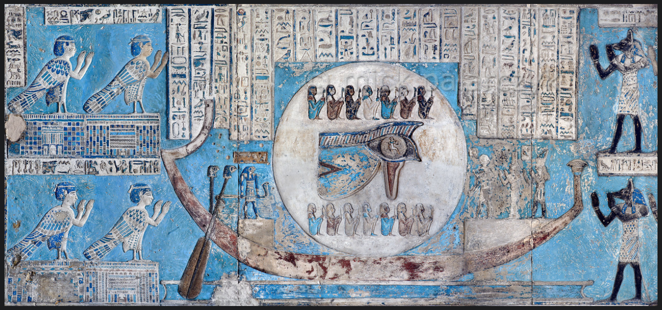

[EGYPT 29569] 'The waning moon and the Eye of Horus at Dendera.' This image of the moon on a boat, decorated with the "healed eye" of Horus, can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The moon eye is part of a panel that deals with the waning moon and which is located at the northern end of the strip. According to Egyptian mythology Horus lost his eye during a battle with Seth (the murderer of his father Osiris) and the eye (called 'Wadjet') was subsequently healed by Thoth. The destruction and healing of the eye was symbolically coupled by the ancient Egyptians to the waning and waxing of the moon. In this depiction of the eye the fourteen sitting deities above and below it personify the fourteen days of the waning moon. The four human-headed birds on the left are (according to the caption above them) the "Souls of the sixth day of the month". The caption further mentions that they honour the moon when it begins to renew its cycle on the 15th day of the month (and starts waning). For an overview of the entire ceiling strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

BUY

[EGYPT 29570] 'Souls worshipping the moon at Dendera.' Four souls in the form of human-headed birds are portrayed with arms that make a worshipping gesture on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The bird souls are part of a panel that deals with the waning moon and which is located at the northern end of the strip (see also picture 29569). A caption above the birds identifies them as the "Souls of the sixth day of the month". The caption further mentions that they honour the moon when it begins to renew its cycle on the 15th day of the month (and starts waning). For an overview of the entire ceiling strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

BUY

[EGYPT 29571] 'Souls worshipping the moon at Dendera.' Two souls in the e form of human-headed birds are portrayed with arms that make a worshipping gesture on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the FIRST STRIP WEST from centre. The bird souls are part of a panel that deals with the waning moon and which is located at the northern end of the strip (see also picture 29569). A caption above the birds identifies them as the "Souls of the sixth day of the month". The caption further mentions that they honour the moon when it begins to renew its cycle on the 15th day of the month (and starts waning). For an overview of the entire ceiling strip see picture 29561. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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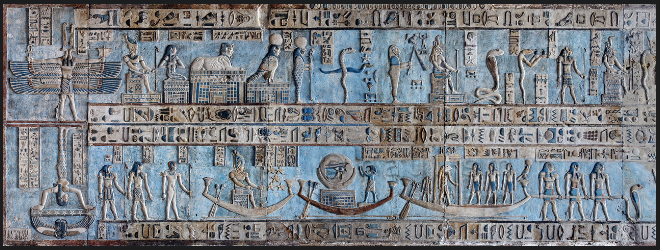

[EGYPT 29572] 'Deities on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' This detail of the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows several deities, most of which are related to heavenly bodies. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the southern end of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. On the right the lower register has three gods who are pulling a boat which transports a shrine with Atum, the god who personifies the evening sun. Behind it follow a boat which carries the eye of the full moon and another vessel which carries an enthroned Osiris personifying the full moon. Next come three standing gods and the register is concluded with one of the four goddesses of the cardinal points, supporting a starry sky. In this case it is Fayt, associated with the west. She is depicted upside down. This goddess almost touches feet with a winged figure that is standing in the upper register. Sporting two snake heads and holding a little sail, this god can be identified as the west wind. The upper register continues with (from left to right) an enthroned Atum (personification of the evening sun) and a pregnant woman on a pedestal who is identified as the "Sky which gives birth to Atum". Next comes the 'ka' (life force) of Atum, depicted as a sphinx. The human-headed soul bird is identified as Atum-Ra-Horakhty, personifying the sun during its setting, midday position and rising. Next to him, the mummified falcon-headed god is Ra-Horakhty. The rest of the upper register is filled with personifications of decanal stars. The decans of Egyptian astronomy were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 3 till 20 of the Seti I B decan family. In this picture we see (from left to right) two snakes crossing each other (decan no. 20), a lion-headed mummiform god (no. 19a), a lion-headed seated goddess (no. 19), two snakes (no. 18 and 17), a cat-headed god (no. 16a), a lion-headed seated goddess (no. 16) and a snake (no. 15). Decans 10 till 3 from this register can be found in picture 29573. The rest of the stars from this decan family can be found on the second ceiling strip east from centre (see picture 29539). For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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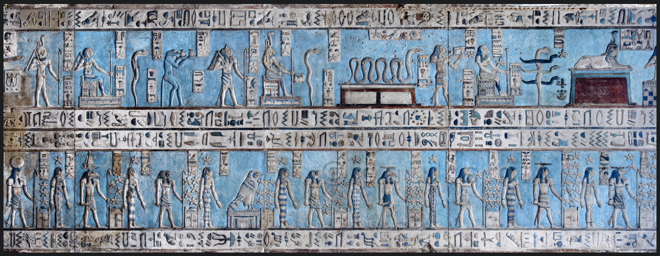

[EGYPT 29573] 'Deities on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' This detail of the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows several deities, most of which are related to heavenly bodies and the hours of the night. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the northern end of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The lower register is inhabited by standing goddesses who have a star above their head. They are the personifications of the twelve hours of the night. The actual hour can be discerned from the number of stars which is depicted above the small shrine that is placed behind the goddess. Furthermore each hour-goddess is accompanied by an associated deity which stands behind her. In this picture we see (from left to right) the hour-goddesses from the third till the tenth hour, with the small shrine and associated deity of the eleventh hour just visible near the edge of the photo. The upper register shows on the right a reclining sphinx on a pedestal and the caption above him tells us that he is the 'ka' (life force) of the sun god Ra. The rest of the upper register is filled with personifications of decanal stars. The decans of Egyptian astronomy were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 3 till 20 of the Seti I B decan family. In this picture we see (from right to left) four snakes crossing each other (decan no. 3), a lion-headed seated goddess (no. 4), a lion-headed god carrying a wadjet eye (no. 4a), a snake on a pedestal (no. 5), an erect snake (no. 6), a lion-headed seated goddess (no. 7), a cat-headed god (no. 7a), a snake-headed baboon (no. 8), an erect snake (no. 9), a lion-headed seated goddess (no. 10) and a nude human-headed god (no. 10a). Decans 15 till 20 from this register can be found in picture 29572. The rest of the stars from this decan family can be found on the second ceiling strip east from centre (see picture 29539). For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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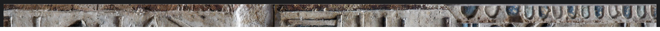
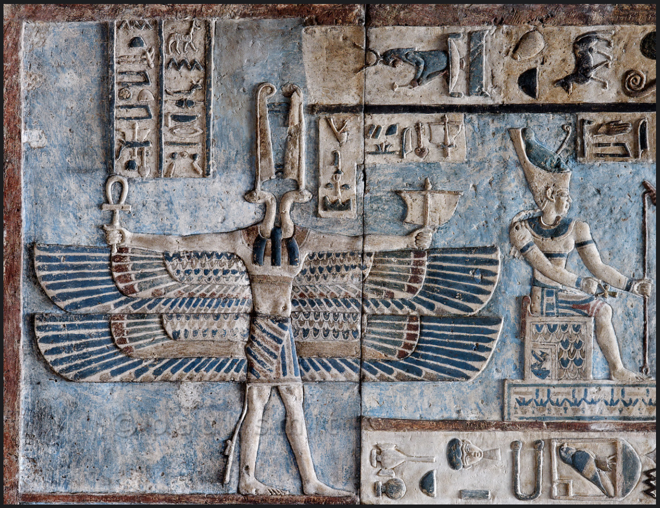
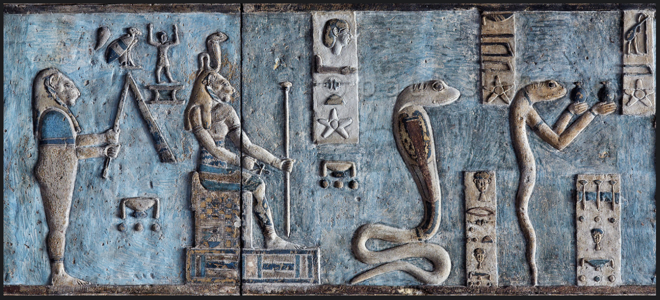




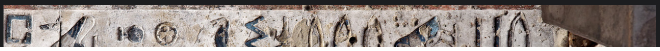
BUY

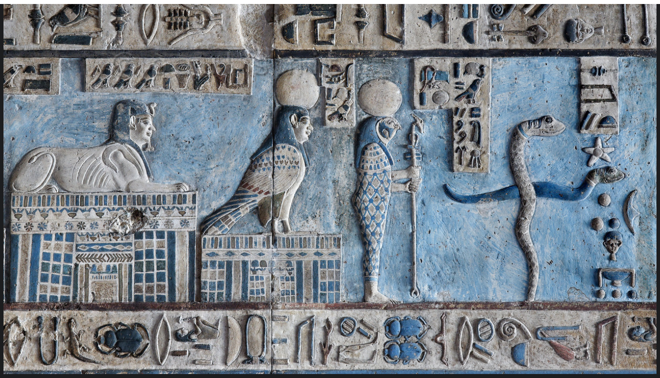
[EGYPT 29574] 'West wind on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Holding a little sail in his hand, a double winged creature with two snake heads personifies the west wind on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. Wind figures such as these only appear in Egyptian monuments of the Greek-Roman period. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The enthroned god wearing the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt is Atum, personification of the evening sun. An overview of the southern end of this ceiling strip can be found in picture 29572. For an overview of the entire astronomical ceiling see picture 29525. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



BUY

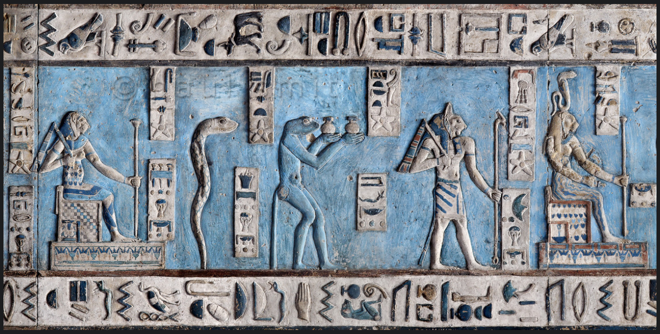
[EGYPT 29576] 'Lions and snakes on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Snakes and lions in all kind of forms populate the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the lion-headed mummiform god represents decan number 19a and is paired off with gold. The lion-headed goddess next to him is decan no. 19 and is also associated with iron and gold. The snake with coiled tail, no.18, is coupled with carnelian and gold. And the erect snake which is holding two jars, no. 17, is watching over glass and gold. For other decanal stars in this register see picture 29572 and 29573. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.





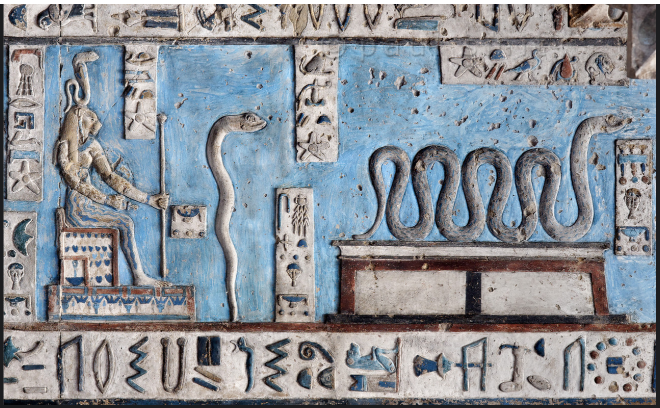
BUY

[EGYPT 29575] 'Sphinx and human-headed bird on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' A human-headed sphinx on a pedestal inhabits the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. According to the caption above it, the sphinx can be identified as the 'ka' (life force) of Atum, the god that personifies the evening sun. The human-headed soul bird next to him is identified as Atum-Ra-Horakhty, personifying the sun during its setting, midday position and rising. The mummified falcon-headed god is Ra-Horakhty. The erect serpent which is crossed by a smaller blue snake represents decanal star number 20. For other decanal stars in this register see picture 29572 and 29573. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



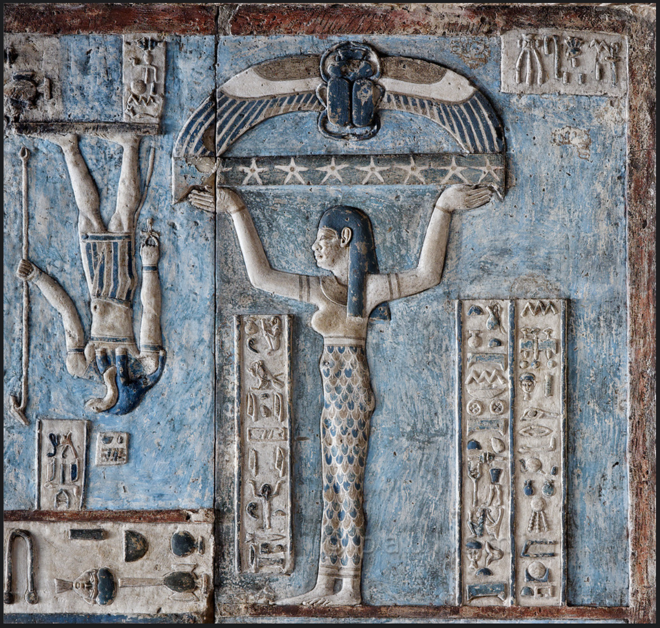
BUY

[EGYPT 29577] 'Lions, snakes and a cat on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Snakes and lions in all kind of forms populate the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the lion-headed seated goddess on the left represents decan number 10 and is paired off with glass and gold. The erect snake next to her is decan no. 9 and is associated with iron and gold. The snake-headed baboon, no.8, is coupled with turquoise. The cat-headed god, no. 7a, is watching over copper and gold. And the lion-headed seated goddess, no. 7 is associated with gold. For other decanal stars in this register see picture 29572 and 29573. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



BUY

[EGYPT 29578] 'Snakes on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Snakes in all kind of forms populate the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The figures in this picture represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the lion-headed seated goddess on the left represents decan number 7 and is paired off with gold. The erect snake next to her is decan no. 6 and is associated with galena and gold. The coiled snake-on a pedestal, no.5, is coupled with glass and gold. For other decanal stars in this register see picture 29572 and 29573. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



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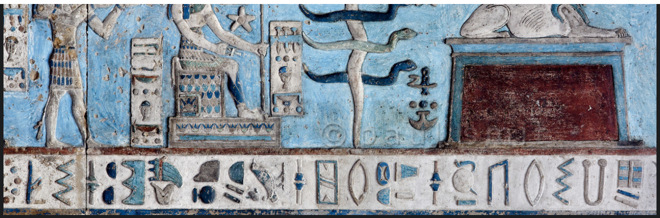
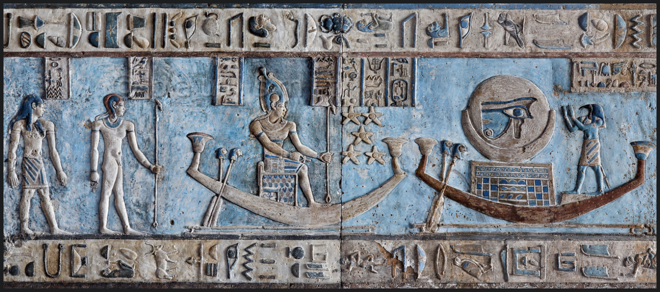
[EGYPT 29580] 'Goddess supporting the sky at Dendera.' A goddess is supporting the sky with raised arms on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. A winged scarab beetle, symbol of the rising sun, hovers above it. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the southern end of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The goddess is one of the four goddesses of the cardinal points of the compass who support the heavens. This one, called Fayt, is associated with the west. See picture 29572 for a zoomed out view of this ceiling strip. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



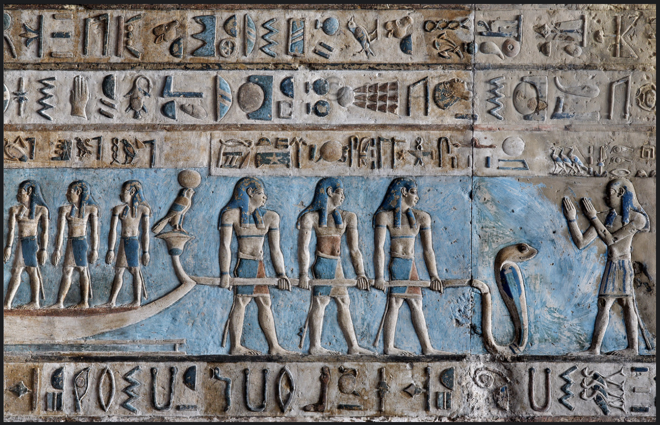
BUY

[EGYPT 29579] 'Lions, snakes and a sphinx on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Snakes and lions in all kind of forms populate the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The right hand of the picture shows a sphinx reclining on a pedestal and the caption above him tells us that he is the 'ka' (life force) of the sun god Ra. The rest of the figures in this photo represent decans. Decans were essentially 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as belonging to the Seti I B decan family. A peculiarity of these decans is that each is associated with a certain mineral, metal or type of wood. It is mentioned in a little caption near the lower part of each figure. Thus the group of snakes represent decan number 3 and is paired off with garnet. The lion-headed seated goddess next to them is decan no. 4 and is associated with glass and gold. And the lion-headed god holding a wadjet eye, no.4a, is coupled with turquoise and gold. For other decanal stars in this register see picture 29572 and 29573. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



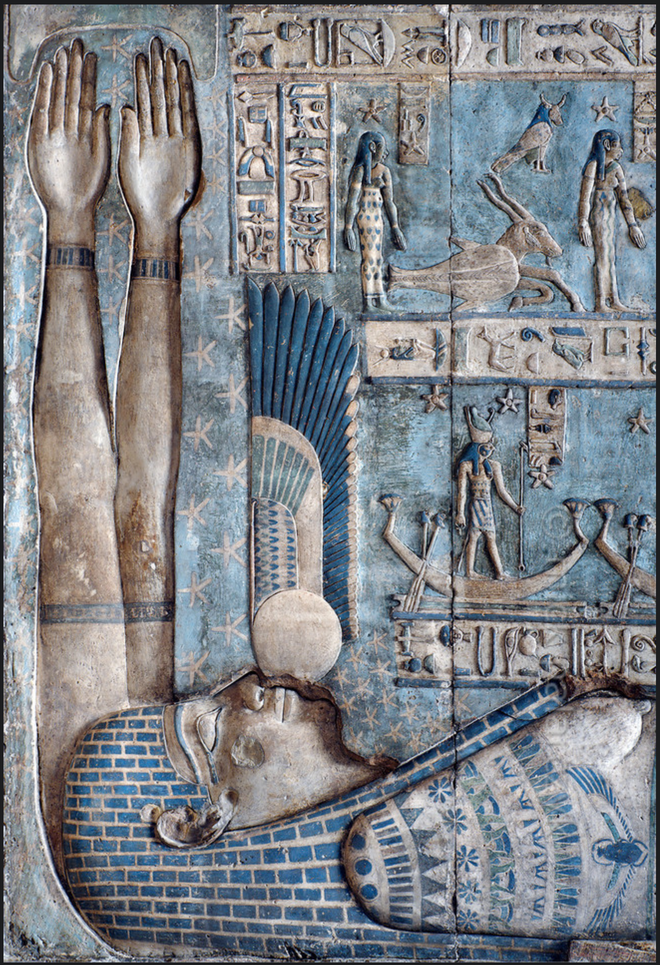
BUY

[EGYPT 29581] 'Osiris and the moon on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Boats carrying Osiris and the moon sail across the sky on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. Worshipped by Thoth, the boat on the right transports a full moon which is decorated with the Wadjet eye. According to Egyptian mythology Horus lost his eye during a battle with Seth (the murderer of his father Osiris) and the eye (called 'Wadjet') was subsequently healed by Thoth. The destruction and healing of the eye was symbolically coupled by the ancient Egyptians to the waning and waxing of the moon. The boat in the middle of the picture carries an enthroned Osiris personifying the full moon. See picture 29572 for a zoomed out view of this ceiling strip. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



BUY

[EGYPT 29582] 'Pulling the sun bark at Dendera.' Three gods are pulling the sun bark across the sky on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. A caption above the three men mentions that "they are the stars who accompany the sun in the northern sky." That fits with the main passenger of the boat: Atum, personification of the evening sun (he is just outside the frame of this photo, but see picture 29572 for zoomed out view). The worshipping man on the right is one of three Souls of the West who welcome the solar bark. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

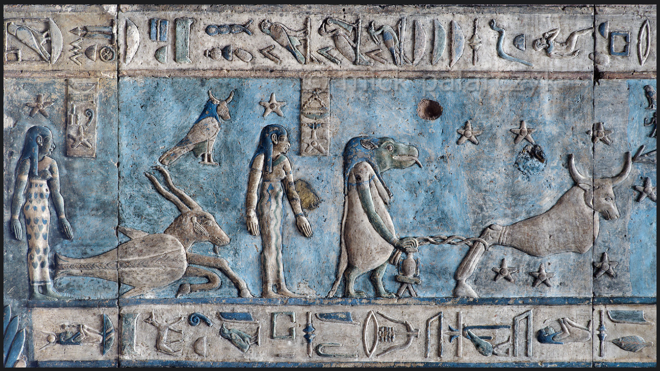


BUY

[EGYPT 29584] 'Setting of the sun in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' A winged setting sun is swallowed by the sky goddess Nut on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking the southern end of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. The entire strip is enveloped by the outstretched body

BUY

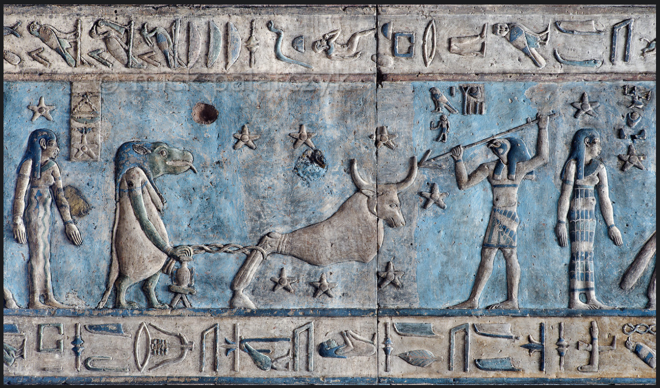
[EGYPT 29583] 'Hours of the night on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Three goddesses of the nightly hours can be seen on this picture of the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the SECOND STRIP WEST from centre. The register is inhabited by standing goddesses who have a star above their head. They are the personifications of the twelve hours of the night. The actual hour can be discerned from the number of stars which is depicted above the small shrine that is placed behind the goddess. Furthermore each hour-goddess is accompanied by an associated deity which stands behind her. In this picture we see (from left to right) the hour-goddesses of the fifth, sixth and seventh hour. Other nightly hour-goddesses from this register can be seen in picture 29573. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.



BUY

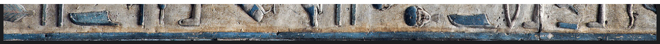
[EGYPT 29585] 'Big Dipper, Draco and Capricorn on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' This detail of the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows several deities, most of which are related to heavenly bodies and the hours of the night. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a segment of the upper register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. The bull-like figure on the right personifies the constellation of the Big Dipper. From other sources we know that he was called Meskhetiu and was associated with the evil god Seth. He is held captured by a chain which is attached to a mooring post that is watched over by a hippopotamus goddess. She is named Isis-Djamet and can be most likely identified with the constellation of Draco. The mooring post is the celestial pole around which the Big Dipper revolved in ancient Egyptian times. And thus the evil Seth/Big Dipper was unable to escape from the guard of Isis (the hippo) and wander off among the rest of the starry gods. (In the last 4000 years the celestial pole has moved away from Draco to the present Polestar, due to precession.) On the left, the two standing goddesses who have a star above their head are personifications of the first and second hour of the night. The goat-headed fish between them is the zodiac sign Capricorn. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire westernmost strip (see picture 29587 till 29590) and the other six can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip of the hall (see picture 29526). These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, whereas the hippo and bull constellations are of ancient Egyptian origin. The bull-headed bird above the fish-goat personifies the planet Saturn. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

of the sky goddess Nut but we see only the upper part of her body in this picture. After swallowing the sun it will travel through her body and she will give birth to it in the morning at the other end of the strip (see picture 29592). On the right we see the beginning of the two registers which make up the rest of this ceiling strip. In the upper register the two standing goddesses who have a star above their head are personifications of the first and second hour of the night. The goat-headed fish between them is the zodiac sign Capricorn. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire westernmost strip (see picture 29587 till 29590) and the other six can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip of the hall (see picture 29526). These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The bull-headed bird above the fish-goat personifies the planet Saturn. The god in the boat is decanal star number 17. In fact, the lower register of the westernmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 1 till 17 and 36 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 18 till 35 can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip.(see picture 29526). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



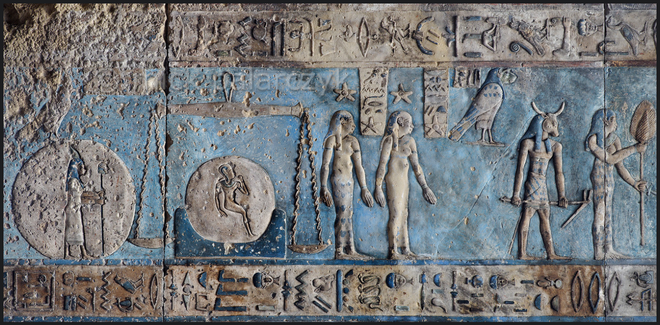
BUY

[EGYPT 29586] 'Big Dipper and Draco on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' This detail of the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows several deities, most of which are related to heavenly bodies and the hours of the night. The astronomical ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a segment of the upper register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. The bull-like figure in the centre personifies the constellation of the Big Dipper (its seven conspicuous stars are depicted around the figure). From other sources we know that he was called Meskhetiu and was associated with the evil god Seth. He is held captured by chain which is attached to a mooring post that is watched over by a hippopotamus goddess. She is named Isis-Djamet and can be most likely identified with the constellation of Draco. The mooring post is the celestial pole around which the Big Dipper revolved in ancient Egyptian times. And thus the evil Seth/ Big Dipper was unable to escape from the guard of Isis (the hippo) and wander off among the rest of the starry gods. (In the last 4000 years the celestial pole has moved away from Draco to the present Polestar, due to precession.) From the right the Seth bull is speared by a falcon-headed god who is named here "Horus, fighter against enemies". He is likely to represent one of the other circumpolar constellations. In Egyptian mythology Horus fought with Seth after the latter had killed Osiris, father of Horus. On the left and right, the two standing goddesses who have a star above their head are personifications of the second and third hour of the night. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



BUY

[EGYPT 29587] 'Sagittarius on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' A winged centaur-like creature portrays the zodiac sign Sagittarius on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. Sagittarius is depicted with two heads, human in front, lion in back. He also has two tails, the upper one being a scorpion's tail, turned back. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire westernmost strip (see picture 29585 till 29590) and the other six can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip of the hall (see picture 29526). These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The falcon above Sagittarius is a personification of the planet Jupiter. Standing on either side of Sagittarius, the two goddesses who have a star above their head are personifications of the third and fourth hour of the night. On the left a falcon-headed god who is named "Horus, fighter against enemies" is spearing Seth (who is outside the frame of the picture, but see photo 29586). This Horus likely represents one of the circumpolar constellations. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



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[EGYPT 29589] 'Libra and Virgo on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' Scales and a woman holding an ear of corn portray the zodiac signs Libra and Virgo on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. The scales of Libra are positioned over the hieroglyphic sign for 'horizon' (with a child depicted within the circle of the sun), perhaps referring to the horizontality of the scales' arm. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire westernmost strip (see picture 29585 till 29590) and the other six can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip of the hall (see picture 29526). These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. On the left, the human-headed goddess inside a disk represents a star or constellation which is only known from this astronomical ceiling. The hardly visible falcon above it is thought to represent the planet Venus. In the centre of the picture the two standing women with stars above theirs heads are the goddesses of the eight and ninth hour of the night. The frog-headed falcon (identified by a caption as 'Sebek') is a personification of the planet Mercury. In a text dating from the New Kingdom Mercury was described as "Seth in the evening twilight and a god in the morning twilight." Proof that by that time Mercury was known as both evening and morning star. The bull-headed god holding a hoe has been identified by some scholars as the constellation of Boötes. However, Boötes lies north of the ecliptic and the round zodiac of Dendera (which is kept in the Louvre) places this same bull-headed god south of it, so the identification is not certain. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

[EGYPT 29588] 'Scorpio on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' A giant scorpion with curved tail portrays the zodiac sign Scorpio on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. There are six zodiac signs depicted in the entire westernmost strip (see picture 29585 till 29590) and the other six can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip of the hall (see picture 29526). These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The falcon with an Upper Egyptian crown above Scorpio is a personification of the planet Mars. On the right, the human-headed deity with the lower body of a hippopotamus and the tail of a scorpion personifies a star or constellation south of the Ecliptic. North of the Ecliptic is the constellation made up of a jackal standing on a hoe. The astronomical location of both heavenly bodies is known from the famous round zodiac of Dendera which is kept in the Louvre. The standing goddess on the left who has a star in front of her head is a personification of the fifth hour of the night. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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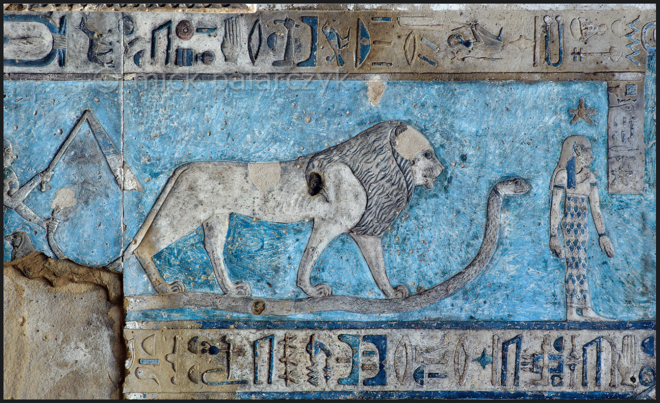

[EGYPT 29590] 'Leo on astronomical ceiling at Dendera.' A lion standing on a snake portrays the zodiac sign Leo on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the upper register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. Leo is one of the six zodiac signs depicted in the entire westernmost strip (see picture 29585 till 29590) and the other six can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip of the hall (see picture 29526). These signs are of Babylonic-Greek origin and are not found in Egypt before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BC. The standing woman with a star above her head is the goddess of the 12th hour of the night. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

BUY

[EGYPT 29591] 'Decanal stars on boats in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' Starry creatures are sailing in boats across the firmament on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at a detail of the lower register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. The squatting baboon, the figure group and the standing god are the decanal stars no. 12, 11 and 10. The boat of no. 11 is transporting the three hieroglyphic signs which make up the name of this heavenly body: a head, an arm and a stand for three water jugs. In fact, the lower register of the westernmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 1 till 17 and 36 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 18 till 35 can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip (see picture 29526). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

BUY

[EGYPT 29592] 'Birth of the sun in Hathor Temple at Dendera.' The rising sun is born from the lap of sky goddess Nut in the form a winged scarab beetle on the astronomical ceiling in the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The ceiling consists of seven separate strips but here we are looking at the northern end of the lower register of the WESTERNMOST STRIP. The entire strip is enveloped by the outstretched body of the sky goddess Nut but here only her thigh (on the right) and a narrow section of her belly (at the lower edge of the picture) are visible. The wave pattern on Nut's dress symbolizes the cosmic river on which the sun traveled during the night. On the left the standing god in a boat is a personification of decanal star number 36. In fact, the lower register of the westernmost strip is entirely filled with figures who are standing or sitting in boats. These are the decans, 36 stars or star groups near the ecliptic whose rise or transit could be used to tell the time during the night. Eventually they were also used by astronomers as place-markers in the sky to divide up the Ecliptic in equal portions. Decans first appear during the Middle Kingdom on the inside of coffin lids, providing the deceased with his own private start clock. Unfortunately, during the subsequent centuries many different lists of decanal stars were developed and very few of these stars can be identified on a modern star map. The decans in this register were listed by Neugebauer and Parker as stars 1 till 17 and 36 of the Tanis decan family. Stars 18 till 35 can be found on the easternmost ceiling strip (see picture 29526). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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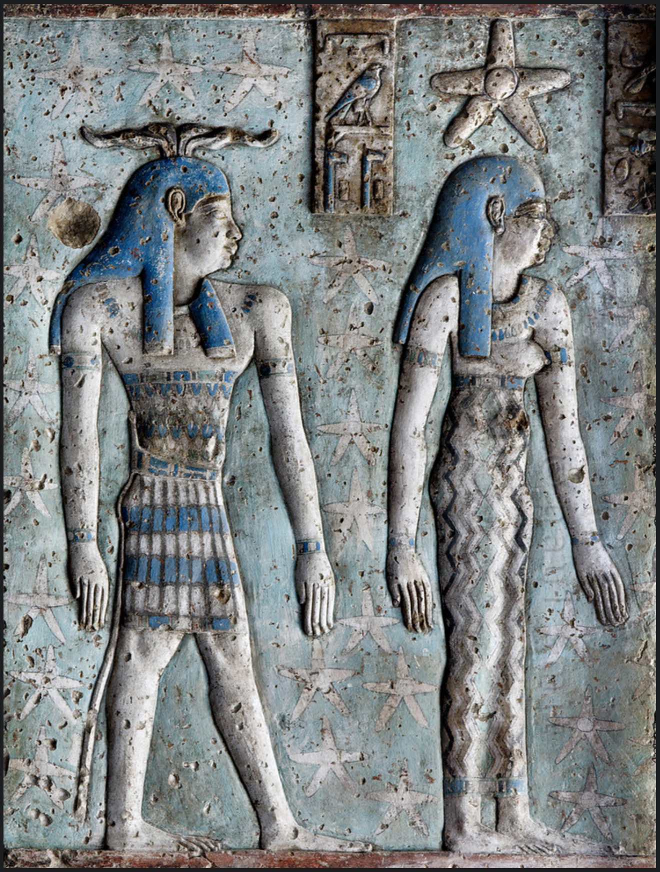

[EGYPT 29594] 'The tenth hour of the night at Dendera.' Entering the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is like stepping into an ancient time machine. The entire ceiling of the hall is covered with hundreds of figures who have some relation to Time and the revolving Heavens. So it is very appropriate that, at the very entrance of the hall, the architraves that rest on the facade columns are decorated with the goddesses of the hours of the night and the day. In this picture we see, crowned with a star, the goddess of the tenth hour of the night. She is followed by a deity who is associated to this particular hour. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

BUY

[EGYPT 29593] 'The sixth and eight hour of the night at Dendera.' Entering the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is like stepping into an ancient time machine. The entire ceiling of the hall is covered with hundreds of figures who have some relation to Time and the revolving Heavens. So it is very appropriate that, at the very entrance of the hall, the architraves that rest on the facade columns are decorated with the goddesses of the hours of the night and the day. In this picture we see, crowned with a star, the goddesses of the sixth (above) and eight hour (below) of the night. Both goddesses are followed by a deity who is associated to that particular hour. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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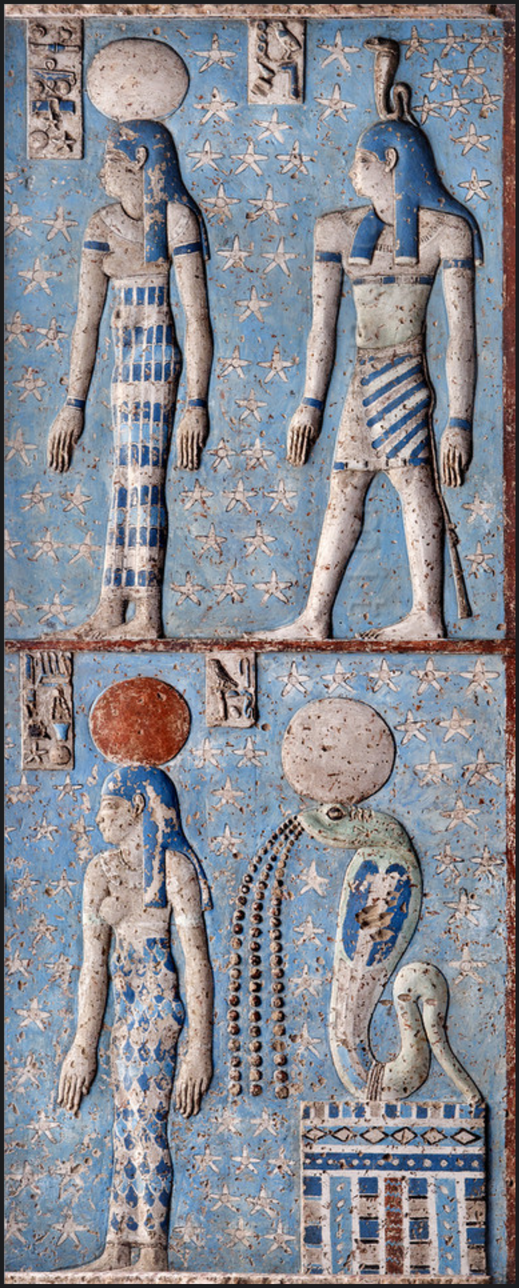

[EGYPT 29595] 'The second and fourth hour of the day at Dendera.' Entering the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is like stepping into an ancient time machine. The entire ceiling of the hall is covered with hundreds of figures who have some relation to Time and the revolving Heavens. So it is very appropriate that, at the very entrance of the hall, the architraves that rest on the facade columns are decorated with the goddesses of the hours of the night and the day. In this picture we see, crowned with a sun disk, the goddesses of the second (above) and fourth hour (below) of the day. Both goddesses are followed by a deity who is associated to that particular hour. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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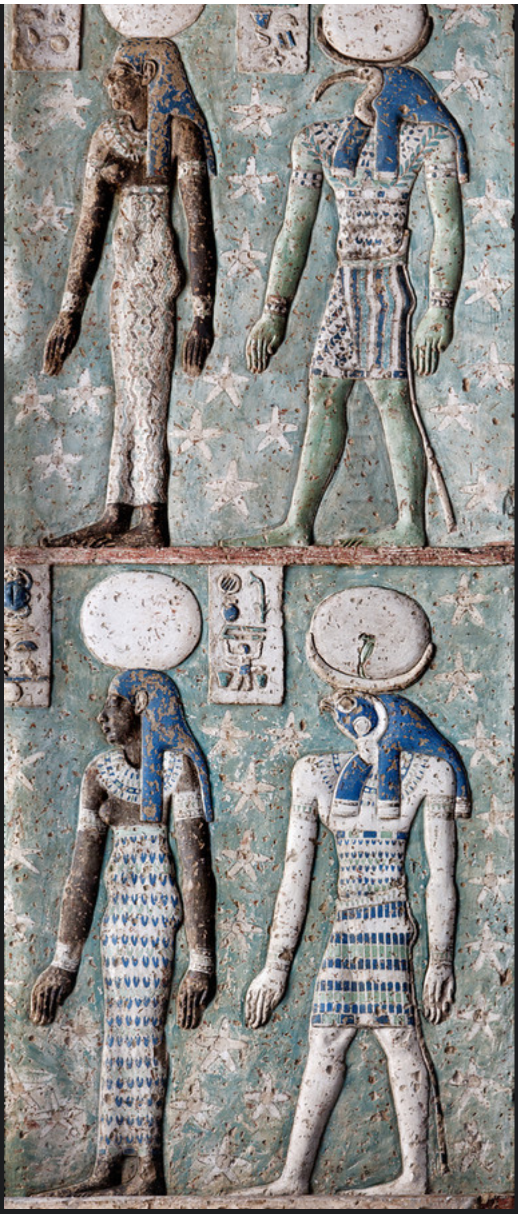

[EGYPT 29596] 'The sixth and eight hour of the day at Dendera.' Entering the outer hypostyle hall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera is like stepping into an ancient time machine. The entire ceiling of the hall is covered with hundreds of figures who have some relation to Time and the revolving Heavens. So it is very appropriate that, at the very entrance of the hall, the architraves that rest on the facade columns are decorated with the goddesses of the hours of the night and the day. In this picture we see, crowned with a sun disk, the goddesses of the sixth (above) and eight hour (below) of the day. Both goddesses seem to be of Nubian descent and are followed by a deity who is associated to that particular hour. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the Roman period (first century AD). Photo Paul Smit.

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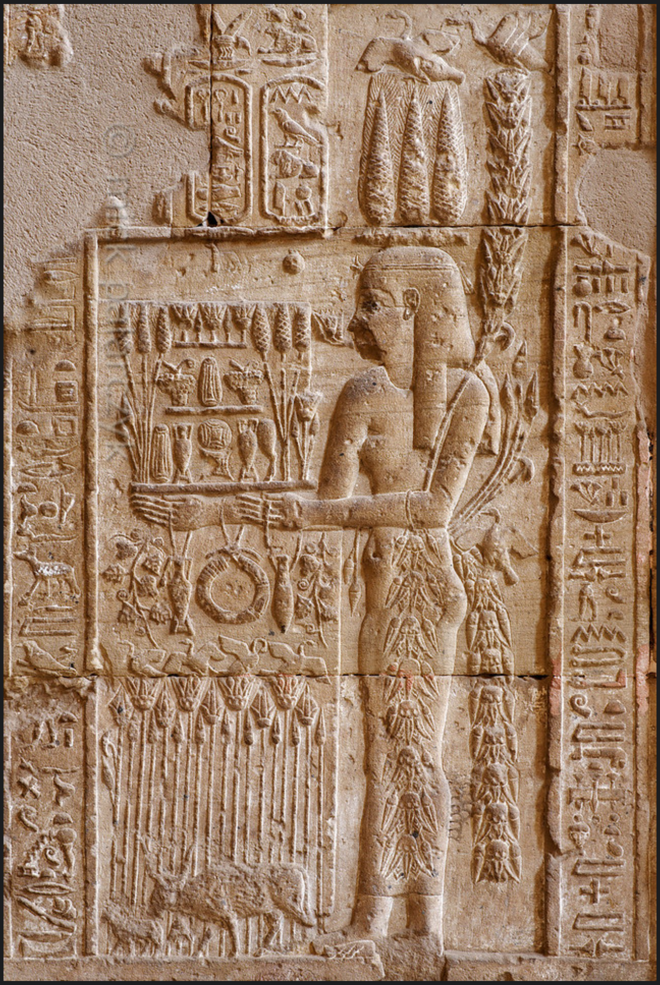

[EGYPT 29597] 'Fertility goddess at Dendera.' A fertility goddess is presenting a tray with ears of corn, bread, flowers and grapes, not unlike the Basket of Plenty that is usually associated with Demeter, the Greek goddess of Harvest. This Egyptian goddess has three ears of corn as a headdress and has several garlands of flowers wrapped around her body. The relief is located on the lower part of the (interior) western wall of the outer hypostyle hall in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. This part of the temple was built during the first century AD. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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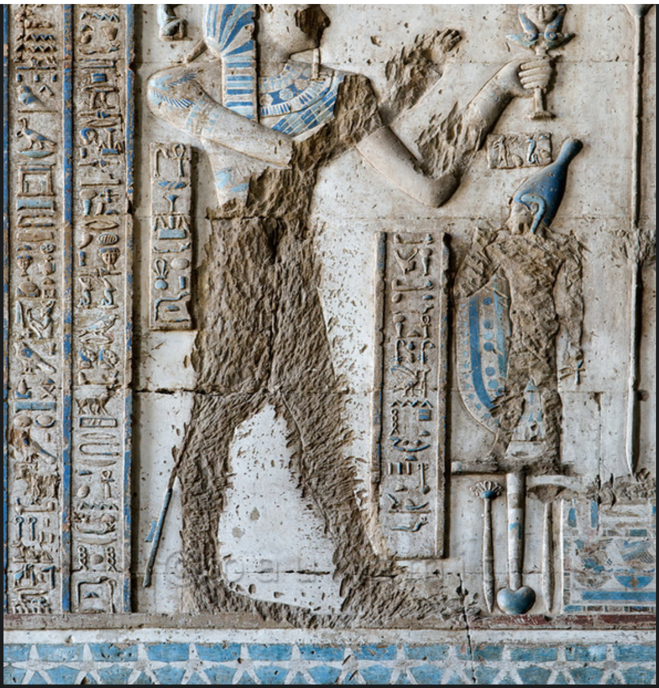

[EGYPT 29598] 'Vandalized Emperor Nero at Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows the Roman Emperor Nero as a pharaoh. He is presenting a mirror which is decorated with the head of Hathor. The lower half of the image has been chiseled away with fervor, presumably by christians. The relief is located on the (interior) eastern wall of the outer hypostyle hall of the temple and dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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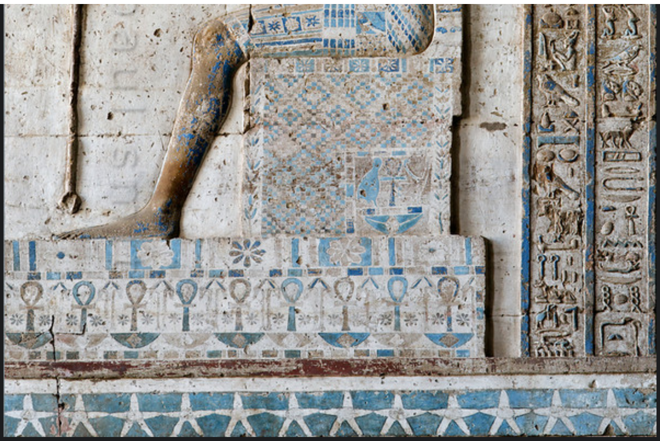

[EGYPT 29599] 'Horus in Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows Horus of Edfu, sitting on a throne and wearing the combined crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. The relief is located on the (interior) eastern wall of the outer hypostyle hall of the temple and dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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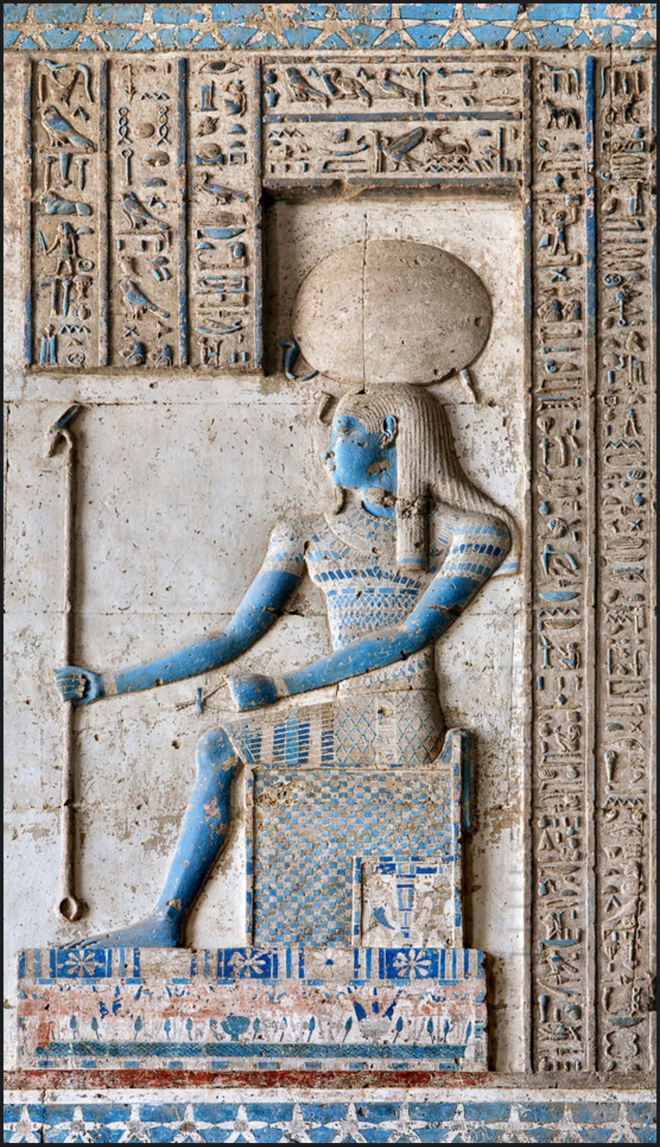

[EGYPT 29601] 'Harsomptus in Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows the god Harsomptus (also called Ihy) sitting on a throne. He was the child of Hathor of Dendera and Horus of Edfu. During a yearly festival Hathor traveled from Dendera to Edfu where she met Horus and conceived their child Harsomptus. The relief is located on the (interior) eastern wall of the outer

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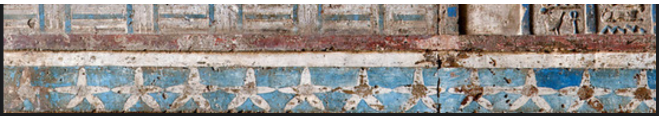

[EGYPT 29600] 'Horus in Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows Horus of Edfu, sitting on a throne and wearing the combined crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. The relief is located on the (interior) eastern wall of the outer hypostyle hall of the temple and dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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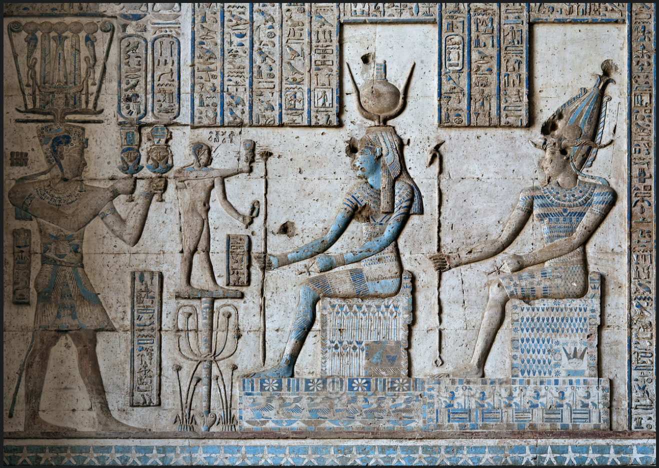

[EGYPT 29602] 'Nero, Isis and Osiris in Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows Isis (with sundisk) and Osiris sitting on thrones. The latter is actually described here as "Osiris Unefer", the last part of the name ("He who is always good") being presented within a cartouche. On the left Roman Emperor (and Pharaoh) Nero is presenting two sistrums, ritual musical instruments decorated with the head of Hathor. Before him stands the child god Ihy, son of Hathor and Horus. The relief is located on the (interior) eastern wall of the outer hypostyle hall of the Dendera temple and dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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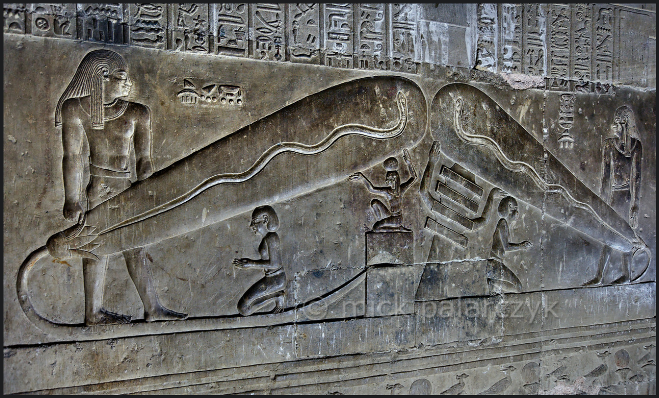

[EGYPT 29604] 'Creation of the cosmos in Dendera.' Some of the most famous images from the Hathor Temple at Dendera can be found in the crypt beneath its southern wall. The reliefs here portray human figures next to bulb-like objects reminiscent of oversized light bulbs. What we witness here is the creation of the cosmos, in the from of an elongated bulb. It springs from a lotus-flower on a boat, the lotus being the first object that floated on the primordial sea, according to Egyptian cosmology. From the flower also appears a snake, which is equated to the rising sun and the god Harsomptus and which is enveloped by the cosmos. Harsomptus is also present in human form, standing behind the bulb and his ka (living essence) is kneeling beneath the bulb. In the representation on the left the cosmos-bulb with its sun-snake is supported by the God of infinity, Heh, kneeling on a square base. The bulb on the right is supported by a Djed pillar with arms, symbol of stability and continuity. A similar sun-snake emerging from a lotus flower can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall (see pictures 29527 and 29528.) It is in this crypt that the golden statue of the ba (soul) of Hathor (mother of Harsomptus) was kept. And it was probably here that the sacred

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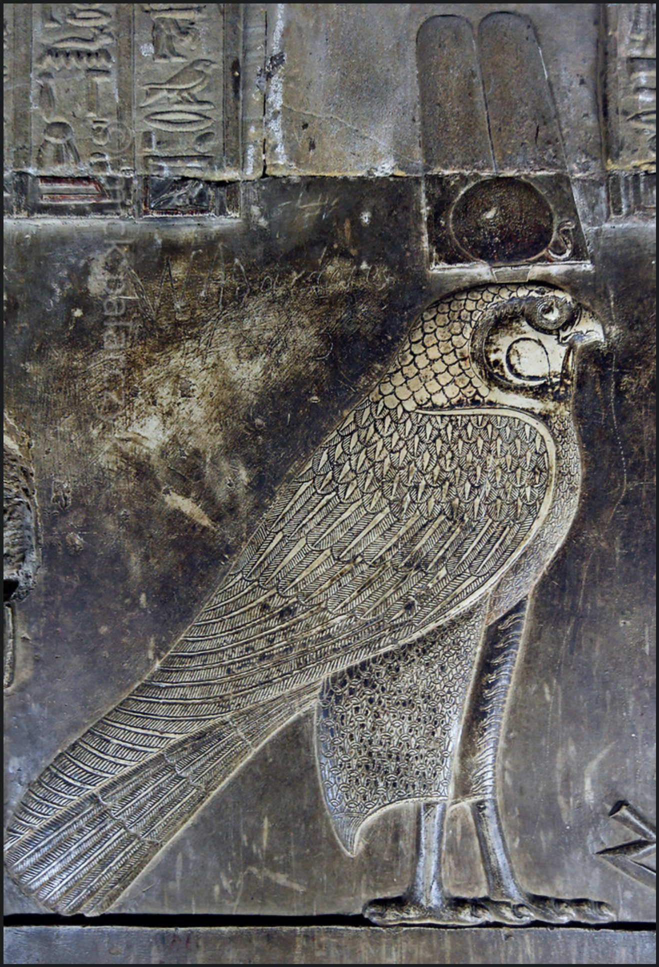
hypostyle hall of the temple and dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.



[EGYPT 29603] 'Harsomptus in Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows the god Harsomptus (also called Ihy) in the form of a falcon. He was the child of Hathor of Dendera and Horus of Edfu. During a yearly festival Hathor traveled from Dendera to Edfu where she met Horus and conceived their child Harsomptus. The relief is located in the underground crypt beneath the southern wall of the temple. It was carved into a block of limestone, which enabled a finer detail than the sandstone which makes up the bulk of the building. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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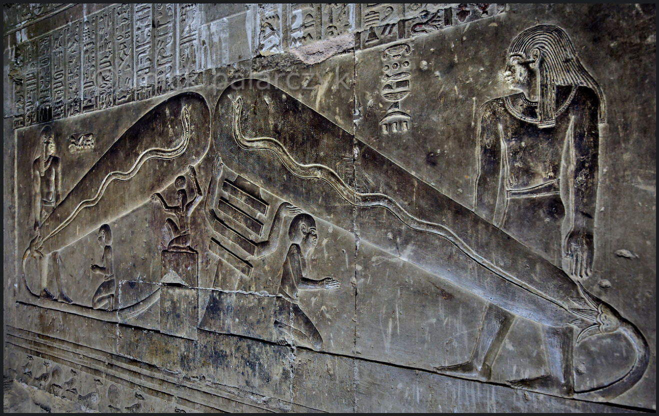

[EGYPT 29605] 'Creation of the cosmos in Dendera.' Some of the most famous images from the Hathor Temple at Dendera can be found in the crypt beneath its southern wall. The reliefs here portray human figures next to bulb-like objects reminiscent of oversized light bulbs. What we witness here is the creation of

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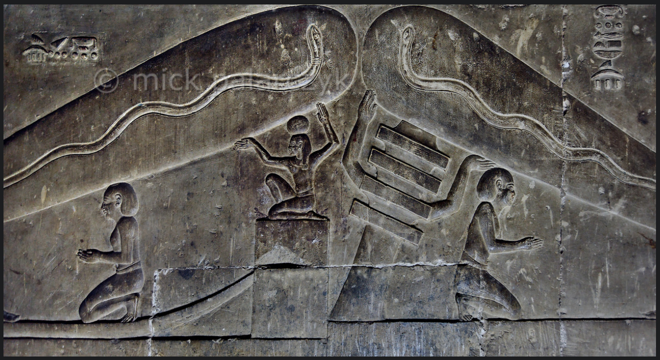
procession started on the eve of the first day of the New Year, bringing the statue of the goddess to the roof of the temple, just as the newly created sun rose from the abyss on the First Day. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



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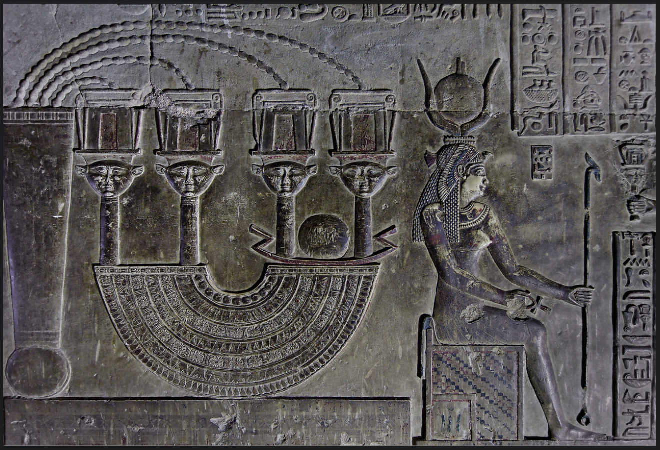
[EGYPT 29606] 'Creation of the cosmos in Dendera.' Some of the most famous images from the Hathor Temple at Dendera can be found in the crypt beneath its southern wall. The reliefs here portray human figures next to bulb-like objects reminiscent of oversized light bulbs. What we witness here is the creation of the cosmos, in the from of an elongated bulb. It springs from a lotus-flower (just outside the right and left frame of the picture) on a boat, the lotus being the first object that floated on the primordial sea, according to Egyptian cosmology. From the flower also appears a snake, which is equated to the rising sun and the god Harsomptus and which is enveloped by the cosmos. Kneeling beneath the bulb is the ka (living essence) of Harsomptus. In the representation on the left the cosmos-bulb with its sun-snake is supported by the God of infinity, Heh, kneeling on a square base. The bulb on the right is supported by a Djed pillar with arms, symbol of stability and continuity. A similar sun-snake emerging from a lotus flower can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall (see pictures 29527 and 29528.) It is in this crypt that the golden statue of the ba (soul) of Hathor (mother of Harsomptus) was kept. And it was probably here that the sacred procession started on the eve of the first day of the New Year, bringing the statue of the goddess to the roof of the temple, just as the newly created sun rose from the abyss on the First Day. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



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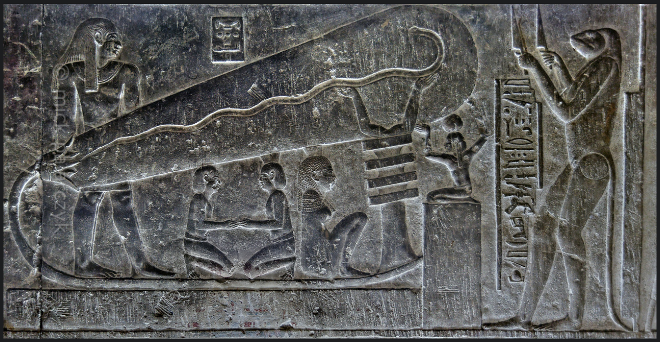
[EGYPT 29608] 'Menat necklace in Dendera.' The crypt below the southern wall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera was used for the safe keeping of several sacred objects and statues used in the rites of Hathor. On the walls of the crypt these objects are depicted in reliefs and described in some detail. Here we see such an object: a Menat necklace, which, when held in the hand and shaken, produced a rustling sound that was thought to please the goddess Hathor. The object consisted of a counterweight, which, when worn, was meant to be located at the back of the neck and which was connected by beaded strings to four sistrums and the actual semicircular necklace. The sistrums were musical instruments in their own right and each was decorated with the face of Hathor. The faces symbolized the four cardinal points of the universe and stress the universal character of the sky goddess

the cosmos, in the from of an elongated bulb. It springs from a lotus-flower on a boat, the lotus being the first object that floated on the primordial sea, according to Egyptian cosmology. From the flower also appears a snake, which is equated to the rising sun and the god Harsomptus and which is enveloped by the cosmos. Harsomptus is also present in human form, standing behind the bulb and his ka (living essence) is kneeling beneath the bulb. In the representation on the left the cosmos-bulb with its sun-snake is supported by the God of infinity, Heh, kneeling on a square base. The bulb on the right is supported by a Djed pillar with arms, symbol of stability and continuity. A similar sun-snake emerging from a lotus flower can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall (see pictures 29527 and 29528.) It is in this crypt that the golden statue of the ba (soul) of Hathor (mother of Harsomptus) was kept. And it was probably here that the sacred procession started on the eve of the first day of the New Year, bringing the statue of the goddess to the roof of the temple, just as the newly created sun rose from the abyss on the First Day. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



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[EGYPT 29607] 'Creation of the cosmos in Dendera.' Some of the most famous images from the Hathor Temple at Dendera can be found in the crypt beneath its southern wall. The reliefs here portray human figures next to bulb-like objects reminiscent of oversized light bulbs. What we witness here is the creation of the cosmos, in the from of an elongated bulb. It springs from a lotus-flower on a boat, the lotus being the first object that floated on the primordial sea, according to Egyptian cosmology. From the flower also appears a snake, which is equated to the rising sun and the god Harsomptus and which is enveloped by the cosmos. Harsomptus is also present in human form, standing behind the bulb. The top of the cosmos-bulb is supported by the God of Infinity, Heh, kneeling on a square base, while the sun-snake is supported by a Djed pillar with arms, symbol of stability and continuity. Sitting beneath the bulb are the goddess Hathor (on the right) and, facing each other, two representations of the ka (living essence) of Harsomptus. Upu, the frog-headed baboon on the right holding two knives in his hands, is a protective genie. It is in this crypt below the southern wall that the golden statue of the ba (soul) of Hathor (mother of Harsomptus) was kept. And it was probably here that the sacred procession started on the eve of the first day of the New Year, bringing the statue of the goddess to the roof of the temple, just as the newly created sun rose from the abyss on the First Day. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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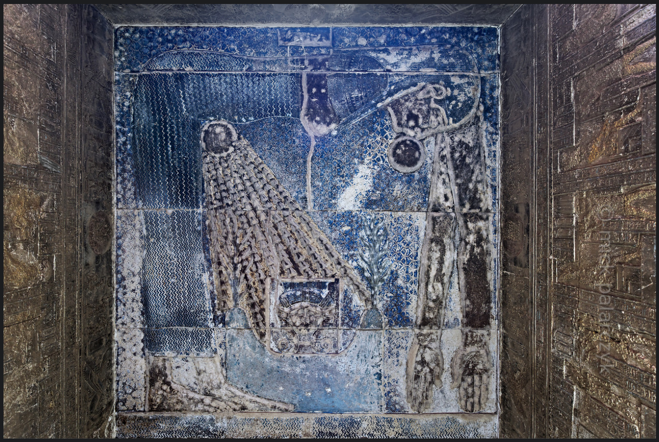
[EGYPT 29609] 'Wabet in Dendera.' The Wabet in the Hathor Temple at Dendera is a kiosk fronted by two columns with Hathor heads. During the New Year's

Hathor, who was also called "Lady with the four Faces". Between two of the heavenly sistrums the solar bark glides through the sky. On the right we see Isis seated on a throne. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29610] 'Ceiling of the Wabet in Dendera.' The Wabet in the Hathor Temple at Dendera is a kiosk located to the west of its central shrine. During the New Year's Festival the golden statue of the ba (soul) of Hathor was brought here from a crypt below the south wall of the temple, where it was stored during the rest of the year. In the Wabet the statue was anointed, clothed and otherwise prepared for its journey to the roof of the temple on the eve of the first day of the year, where it would be rejuvenated by the rays of the New Year sun. Here we see the ceiling of the Wabet, decorated with an image of the temple (a Hathor head within a square) which is placed on the hieroglyphic sign for horizon and which is flanked by two heavenly sycamore trees. The temple is touched by the rays of the rising sun on the first day of the New Year. The sun is appearing from the lap of the sky goddess Nut, after having finished the nightly travel through her body which stands arched over the world and a mass of stars. The wave pattern on Nut's dress symbolizes the cosmic river on which the sun has traveled after she swallowed it in the evening. A similar scene of the rising sun casting its rays on the temple can be found on the astronomical ceiling of the outer hypostyle hall (see picture 29528). This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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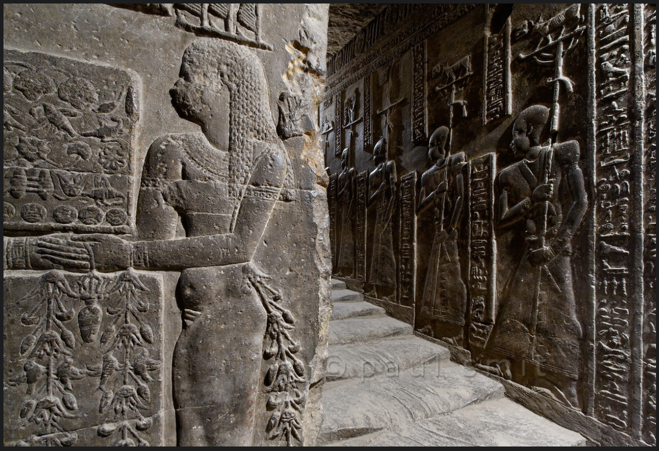

[EGYPT 29612] 'Stairs leading to temple roof at Dendera.' A relief in the temple of Dendera shows a fertility goddess (left) who is carrying a tray with breads and flowers down the western stairs of the temple. She is part of a procession which is accompanying a shrine (not in this picture) containing a statue of the soul of Hathor. On the temple roof the statue has been revitalized by the sun rays of the first day of the Egyptian year and is afterwards returned to a underground crypt where it is kept for the rest of the year. The left-hand side (facing up) of the winding stairs shows the descending procession while the right-hand side shows the same cortège climbing the stairs. Four standard bearing priests which are part of the ascending procession can be seen on the right side of the picture. This part of the temple dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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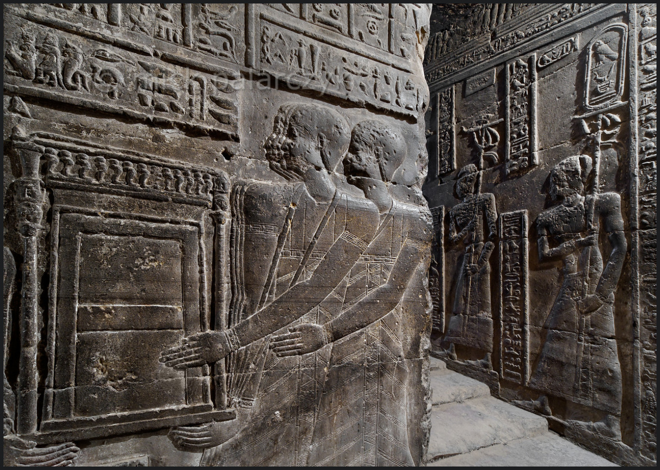
Festival the golden statue of the ba (soul) of Hathor was brought here from a crypt below the south wall of the temple, where it was stored during the rest of the year. In the Wabet the statue was anointed, clothed and otherwise prepared for its journey to the roof of the temple on the eve of the first day of the year, where it would be rejuvenated by the rays of the New Year sun. The ceiling of the Wabet is decorated with an image of the temple (a Hathor head within a square) which is touched by the rays of the sun (the sun itself is hidden behind the left column.) The Wabet ("Pure Place") probably derives its name from embalming kiosks in which royal and private corpses were embalmed and prepared for rejuvenation in the afterlife. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29611] 'Stairs leading to temple roof at Dendera.' A relief in the temple of Dendera shows five priests carrying a shrine down the western stairs of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. Four of them are depicted one behind the other while the fifth is shown separate. Just beyond the frame of the picture another group of four priests is carrying the front side of the shrine. The heavy object is supported by straps which pass around the priests' necks. According to inscriptions on the temple walls the shrine contains a golden statue of the soul (ba) of the goddess Hathor in the form of a human headed bird. Via this winding stairway the statue has been taken to a kiosk on the roof of the temple where the sun rays of the first day of the Egyptian year have revitalized it. Afterwards the priests (shown here) bring the statue and its shrine back to a underground crypt where it is kept for the rest of the year. The shrine bearers are part of a large descending procession which is depicted on the left-hand side (facing up) of the stairs. The right-hand side shows the same procession, but here they are climbing the stairs. Two standard bearing priests which are part of the ascending cortège can be seen on the right side of the picture. For the kiosk on the roof see pictures 29615 and 29616. For the underground crypt see pictures 29603 till 29608. This part of the temple dates from the first century AD. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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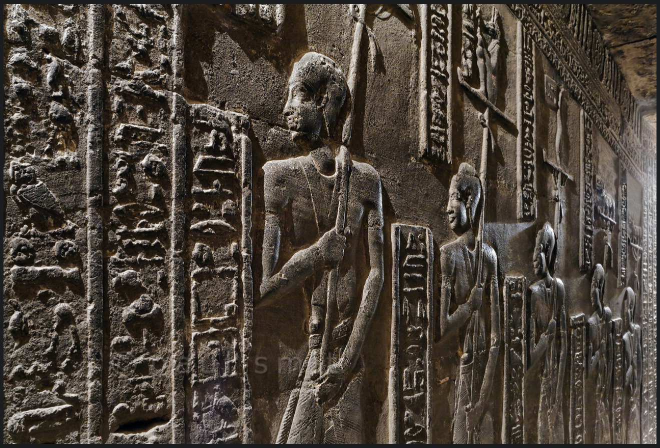

[EGYPT 29613] 'Standard bearing priests at Dendera.' A relief on the wall of the western staircase of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows standard bearing priests. They are part of a stair climbing procession which is accompanying a shrine (not in this picture) containing a statue of the soul of Hathor. On the temple

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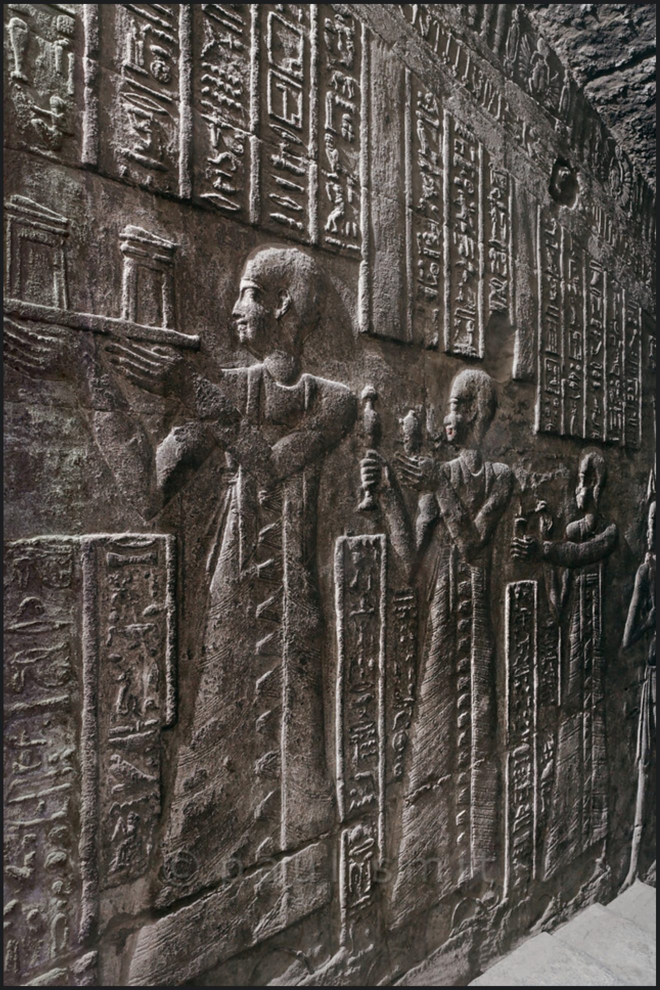
roof the statue will be revitalized by the sun rays of the first day of the Egyptian year. This part of the temple dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.



[EGYPT 29614] 'Priests at Dendera.' A relief on the wall of the western staircase of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows priests carrying sacred objects. They are part of a stair climbing procession which is accompanying a shrine (not in this picture) containing a statue of the soul of Hathor. On the temple roof the statue will be revitalized by the sun rays of the first day of the Egyptian year. This part of the temple dates from the first century AD. Photo Paul Smit.

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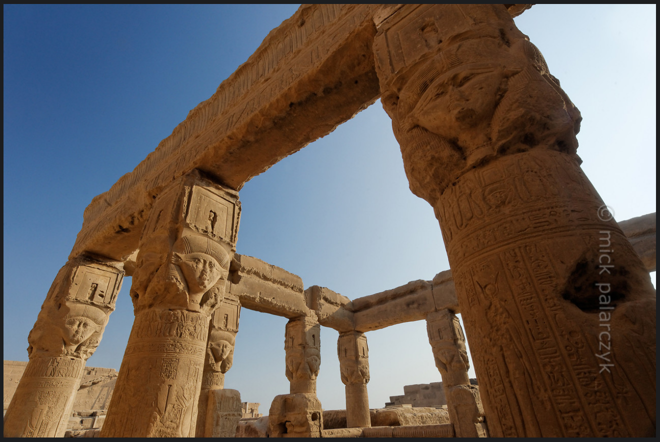

[EGYPT 29616] 'Kiosk of New Year's Festival at Dendera.' Located on the roof of the Hathor Temple at Dendera this kiosk was used during the celebration of the New Year's Festival. On the eve of New Year a golden statue of the soul (ba) of Hathor was brought up here from a crypt below the southern wall in a solemn procession. The statue, together with images of other gods, was placed below a cloth which was suspended over the Hathor headed columns of the kiosk. During the first day of the New Year the cloth was removed at some time so that the rays of the sun could touch the statue, thus rejuvenating its vital energy. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later

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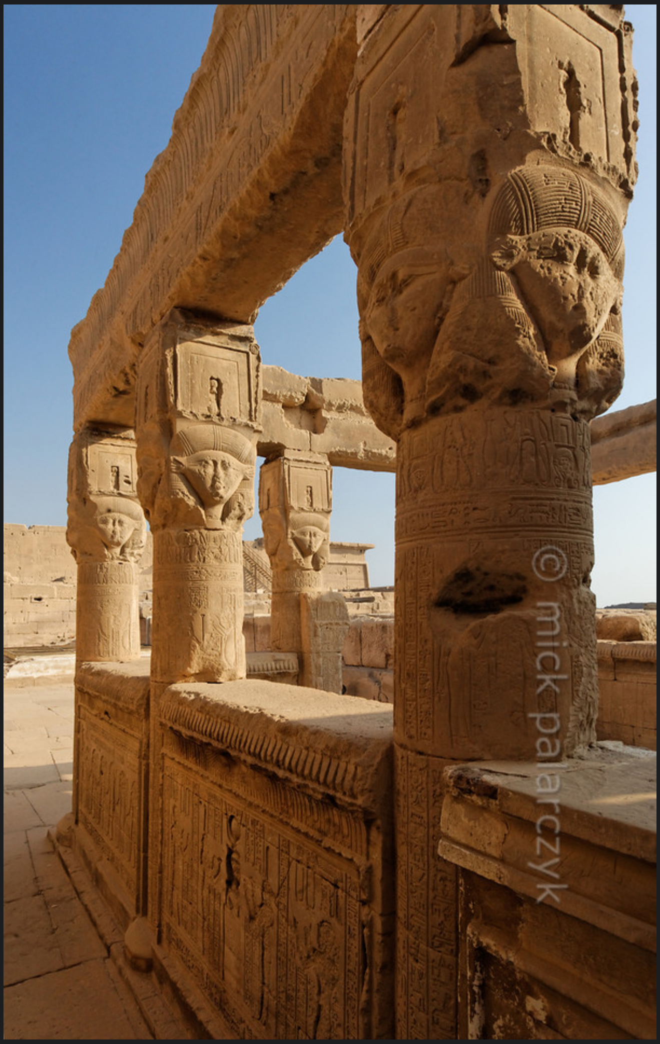

[EGYPT 29615] 'Kiosk of New Year's Festival at Dendera.' Located on the roof of the Hathor Temple at Dendera this kiosk was used during the celebration of the New Year's Festival. On the eve of New Year a golden statue of the soul (ba) of Hathor was brought up here from a crypt below the southern wall in a solemn procession. The statue, together with images of other gods, was placed below a cloth which was suspended over the Hathor headed columns of the kiosk. During the first day of the New Year the cloth was removed at some time so that the rays of the sun could touch the statue, thus rejuvenating its vital energy. Images of guardian deities decorating the exterior walls of the kiosk protected Hathor's soul statute from the bad spirits of the year's last day. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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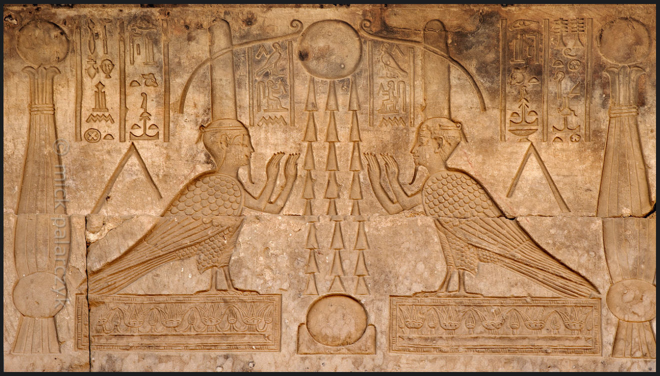
vital energy. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.



[EGYPT 29618] 'Souls of Osiris at Dendera.' Two images of the soul (ba) of Osiris in the form of a human headed bird decorate the court of the eastern Osiris chapels on the roof of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The heads are topped by absurdly big "perfume cones". The birds are placed on either side of three sun rays which connect a sun up in the sky and another one which is sitting on the horizon. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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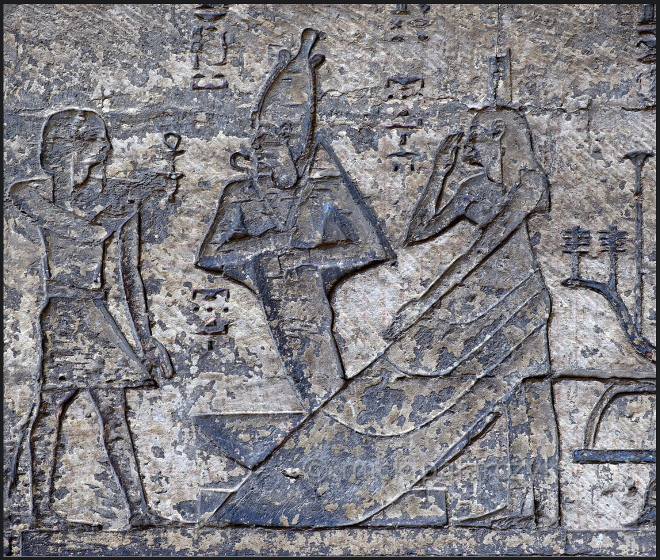

[EGYPT 29620] 'Resurrection of Osiris at Dendera.' A relief in the northernmost of the western Osiris chapels on the roof of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows a winged Isis (on the right) watching over the resurrection of her husband Osiris. The chapel was used during the Osiris Festival in the month khoiak, which celebrated the resurrection of Osiris. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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[EGYPT 29617] 'Souls of Osiris at Dendera.' Two images of the soul (ba) of Osiris in the form of a human headed bird decorate the court of the eastern Osiris chapels on the roof of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The heads are topped by absurdly big "perfume cones". The birds are placed on either side of three sun rays which connect a sun up in the sky and another one which is sitting on the horizon. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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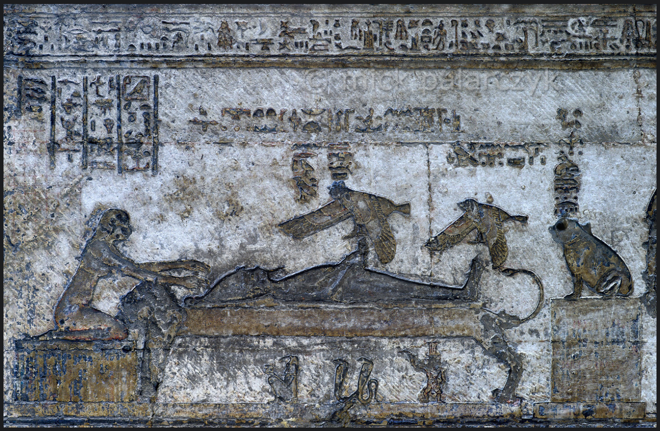

[EGYPT 29619] 'Mummified Osiris at Dendera.' A relief in the northernmost of the western Osiris chapels on the roof of the Hathor Temple at Dendera shows a mummified Osiris lying on a funeral bed. His wife Isis, in the form of a kite, hovers above his erect phallus, ready to be impregnated. It is from this posthumous union that Horus, son of Isis, is born. To the right, sitting on a pedestal, we see Hekat, Goddess of Childbirth, in the form of a frog. On the left is Hathor, her arms outstretched towards Osiris. The chapel was used during the Osiris Festival in the month khoiak, which celebrated the resurrection of Osiris. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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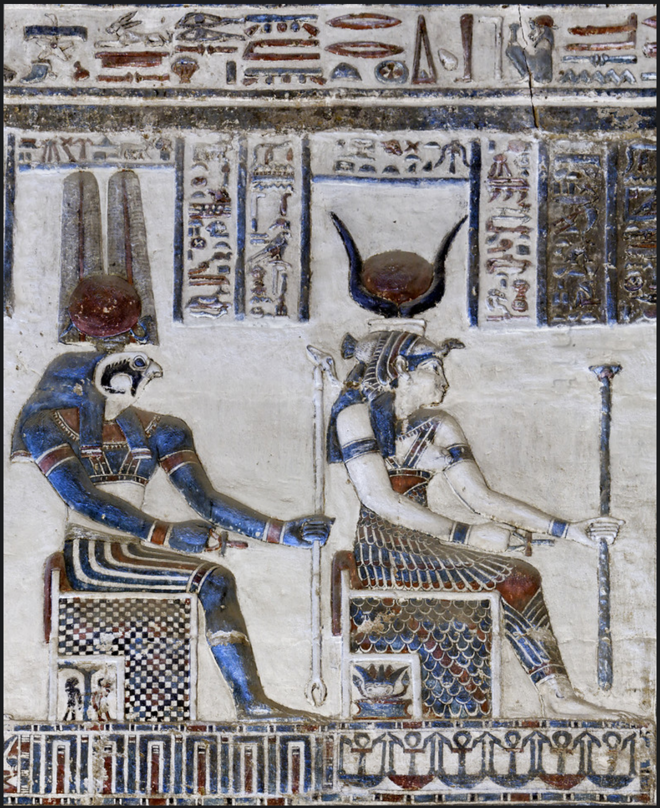

[EGYPT 29622] 'Hathor and Montu in Dendera.' Hathor and the falcon-headed war god Montu, both sitting on a throne, are depicted in this relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The relief can be found in the Chapel of Isis, which is one of the

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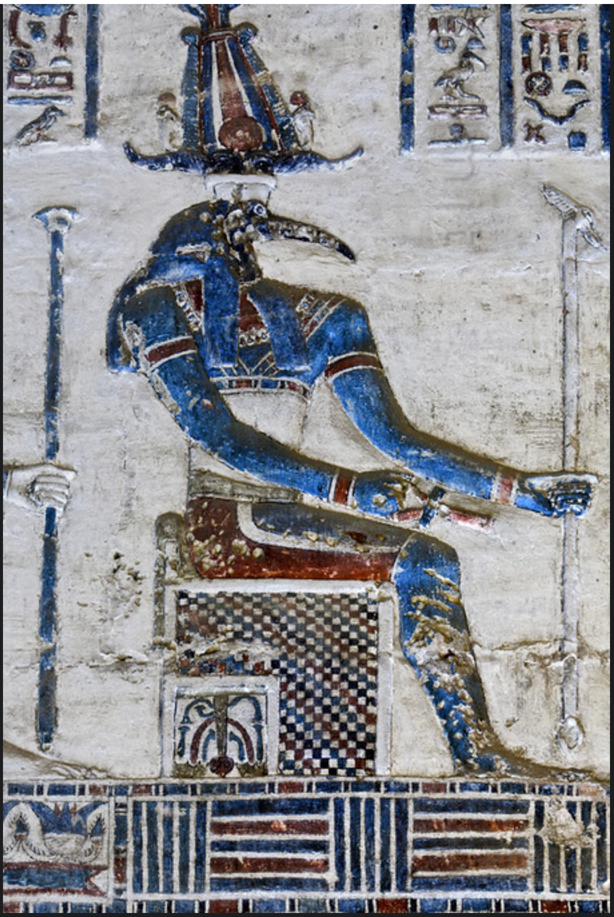

[EGYPT 29623] 'Thoth in Dendera.' Thoth, sitting on a throne, is depicted in this relief in the Hathor Temple at Dendera The relief can be found in the Chapel of Isis, which is one of the shrines located to the east of the central sanctuary. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Paul Smit.

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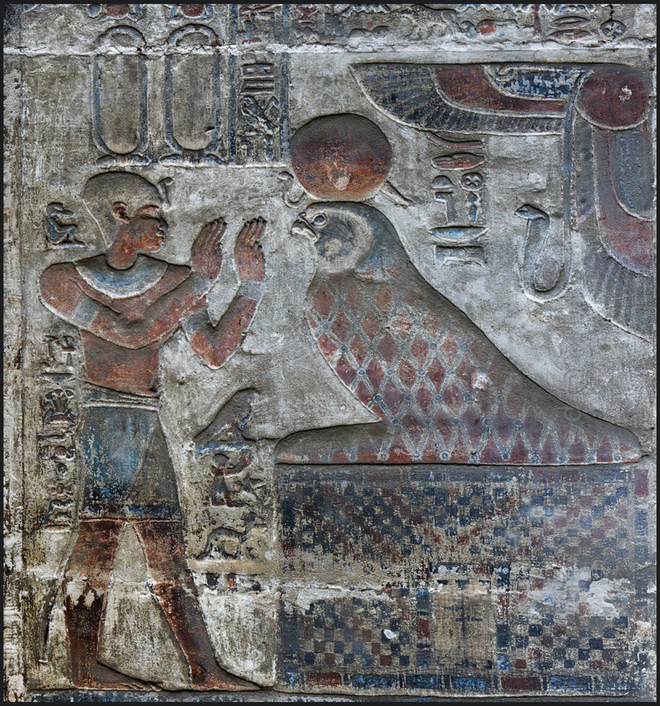
shrines located to the east of the central sanctuary. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Paul Smit.



[EGYPT 29624] 'Ptolemaic Pharaoh and Osiris in Dendera.' A relief in the Hathor Temple of Dendera shows an unidentified Ptolemaic Pharaoh (his cartouches above him are empty) worshipping Osiris in the form of a mummified falcon. The relief can be found in the Chapel of Sokar, which is one of the shrines located to the east of the central sanctuary. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Paul Smit.

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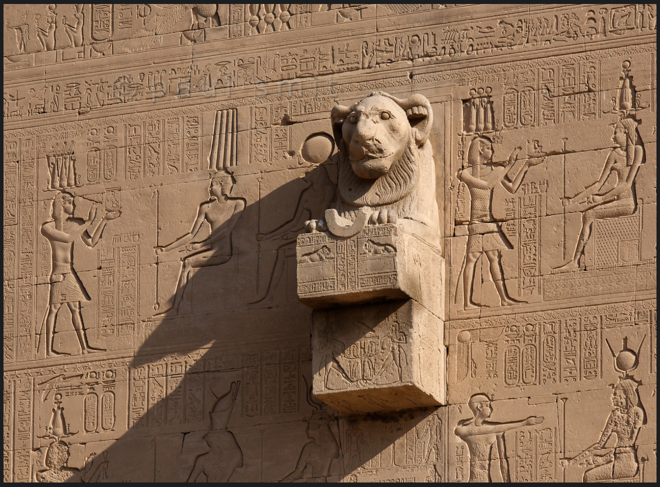

[EGYPT 29626] 'Lion gargoyle at Dendera.' A lion-headed gargoyle adorns the western exterior wall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, allowing the water of occasional downpours to drain from the roof. Its image was probably also intended to ward off evil forces. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Paul Smit.

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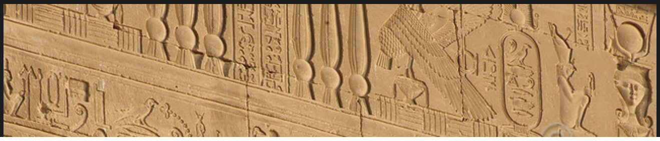

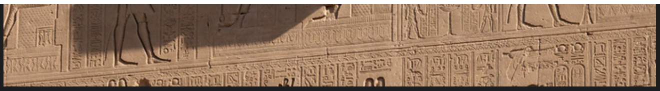

[EGYPT 29625] 'Lion gargoyle at Dendera.' A lion-headed gargoyle adorns the western exterior wall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, allowing the water of occasional downpours to drain from the roof. Its image was probably also intended to ward off evil forces. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Paul Smit.

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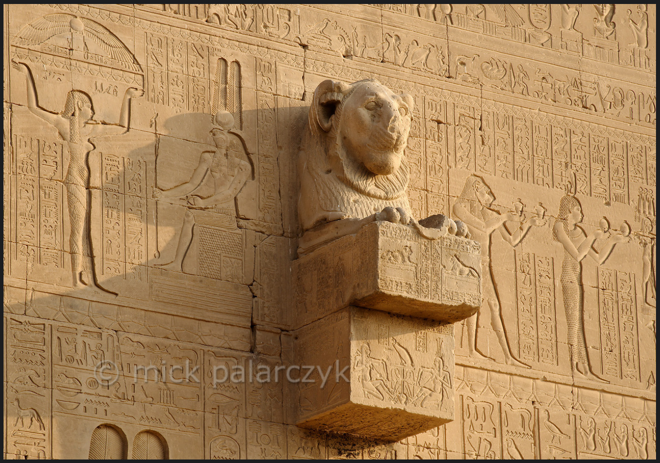
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[EGYPT 29627] 'Lion gargoyle at Dendera.' A lion-headed gargoyle adorns the southern exterior wall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, allowing the water of occasional downpours to drain from the roof. Its image was probably also intended to ward off evil forces. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). On the left, facing a seated Harsomptus, we see a goddess who is supporting a star filled symbol of the sky with a winged sun disk hovering above it. The goddess is one of the four goddesses of the cardinal points of the compass who support the heavens. This one is associated with the north. Photo Mick Palarczyk

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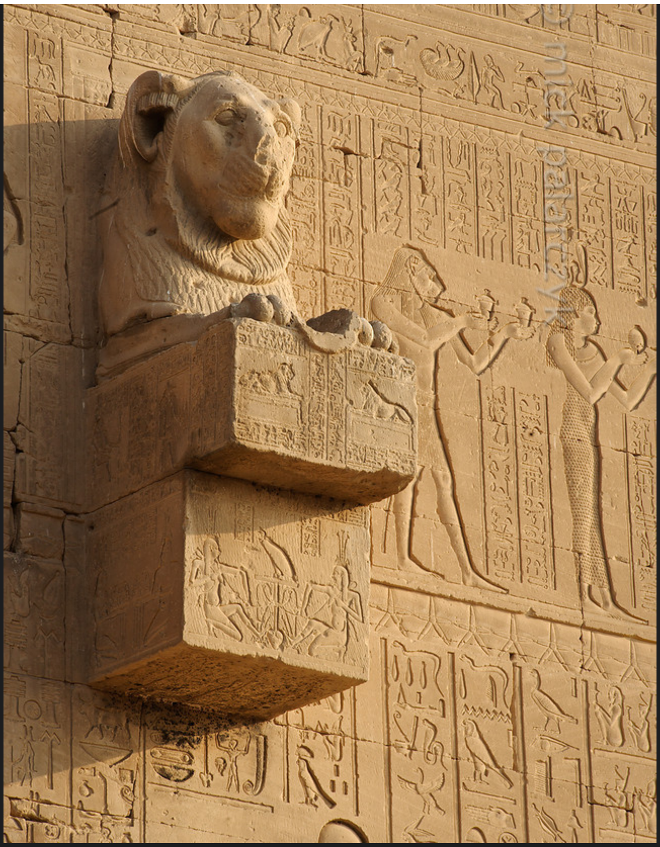
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[EGYPT 29628] 'Lion gargoyle at Dendera.' A lion-headed gargoyle adorns the southern exterior wall of the Hathor Temple at Dendera, allowing the water of occasional downpours to drain from the roof. Its image was probably also intended to ward off evil forces. This part of the Dendera Temple was built during the later Ptolemaic period (first century BC). Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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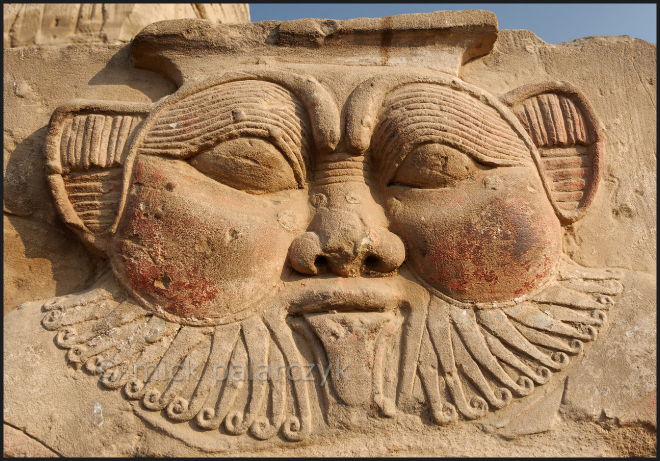
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[EGYPT 29630] 'Bes at Dendera.' Relief of Bes in the forecourt of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The dwarf-like god was seen as the protector of pregnant women, newborn babies and the family. With his grotesque features he is meant to scare off the bad spirits of the night and guard over the safety of the sleeping household. The relief dates to the Ptolemaic-Roman period. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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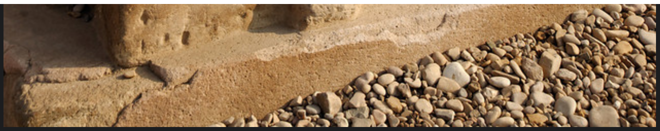

[EGYPT 29629] 'Bes at Dendera.' Relief of Bes in the forecourt of the Hathor Temple at Dendera. The dwarf-like god was seen as the protector of pregnant women, newborn babies and the family. With his grotesque features he is meant to scare off the bad spirits of the night and guard over the safety of the sleeping household. The relief dates to the Ptolemaic-Roman period. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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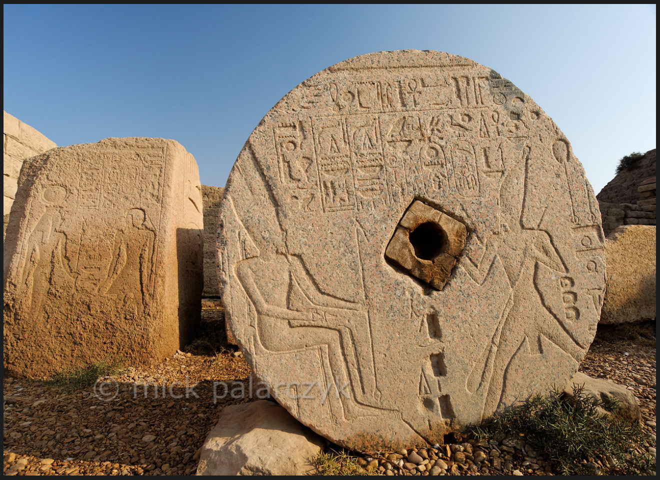

[EGYPT 29631] 'Thutmosis III on a millstone at Dendera.' The forecourt of the Hathor Temple at Dendera displays a granite millstone which has been fashioned out of a fragment of ancient Egyptian relief. The scene shows pharaoh Thutmosis III running before Amun-Ra, who is sitting on a throne. The provenance of the relief is unclear. The Dendera Temple itself mainly shows pharaoh's of the Ptolemaic and Roman period on its walls. Photo Mick Palarczyk.

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